

JUST MARY

Stories

JUST MARY STORIES

Combining

JUST MARY and JUST MARY AGAIN

BY

MARY GRANNAN

ILLUSTRATED BY

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The C. B. C. presents

Just Mary

*with her original stories
written and told by herself
for little people.*

JUST MARY



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Katy Kinsella's Kitty Cat

Katy Kinsella's kitty cat caught cold. Poor little Kitty Cat. Her eyes were all puffy, and her coat was all roughy, and she was sneezing too. Every two and a half minutes she sneezed into her whiskers.

"Kerchoo," said Katy Kinsella's kitty cat.

"Get out," said Katy Kinsella. "I've no place for kerchooing cats in my kitchen."

"Meow . . . kerchoo . . . meow . . . kerchoo!" said Kitty Cat. But the kitchen door closed, and there in the crisp evening air sat Katy's sneezing kitty. First she cried abusedly. Then she sneezed confusedly. And then she climbed up the step-ladder that had been left in the door yard after the fall cleaning, and she sniffed and sneezed into the twilight.





"Meow . . . kerchoo . . .
meow . . . kerchoo!"

Katy Kinsella raised the kitchen window. "Get away from there! Scat, cat!" she said, and then the door-bell rang. Snatching up a clean apron, Katy Kinsella ran to answer it. She forgot to close the window.

"Meow . . . kerchoo . . . meow . . . kerchoo! I'll die of pneumonia, that's what I'll do," still sniffled and sneezed Kitty Cat into the twilight.

"Oh, stop your whimpering and go into the house," said a fat caterpillar on a ladder rung. "Can't you see the window is open?"

And Kitty Cat looked, and Kitty Cat saw that the caterpillar was right, so she leaped from the step-ladder that had been left in the door yard, and she took her eyes that were puffy and her nose that was snuffy back into the kitchen. She lay down under the kitchen range to enjoy the dying heat.

In less than no time at all Katy came back and sat down once more in her rocking chair. You didn't know she'd been sitting in her rocking chair, did you? Well, she had. She rocked, and she knitted, and she rocked, and she knitted, and sometimes she sang . . . tal-la-la-la-la-la-la . . . just like that, but mostly she just rocked and knitted. She didn't know Kitty Cat was back under the range . . . she didn't even dream of it until . . . "Kerchoo!" said Kitty Cat.

"Get out," said Katy Kinsella. "I told you

before I had no place for kerchooing cats in my kitchen."

Once more the sneezing pussy cat found herself out in the twilight.

"Stupid," said a glow-worm. "Why didn't you keep still?"

"Meow . . . kerchoo! Dust got in my nose," sneezed Kitty Cat.

"Oh, you make me sick," said the glow-worm, and she slouched away to her place under the currant bush.

"Here comes the evening news," said a spotted toad on the garden path. "Why don't you make a dash for it, Kitty Cat, when he opens the door? Katy Kinsella may not even see you, and it's worth a try. You'll catch the croup if you stay out here much longer."

"I'll catch more than the croup if Katy Kinsella catches me," said pussy, "but I'll try."

"Evening news!" said the paper boy as he opened the door.

"Kerchoo!" said Kitty Cat as she ran through. "Get out," said Katy Kinsella. But the kitty cat didn't. With all the swiftness in her four paws, she dashed, puffy, roughy, and snuffy, up the front stairs and under the master's bed. Katy Kinsella followed. "Scat, cat!" she said. But the kitty didn't scat.

"I'll get the broom," said Katy Kinsella, and she did. She swept Kitty Cat from her hiding place clear across the room. Kitty Cat leaped into the

clothes press. Katy followed. Kitty went pell-mell down the hall. Katy was after her. Up the stairs flew Kitty Cat. Katy Kinsella still pursued her. "I'll get you if I have to chase you all night," said that lady.

"Kerchoo!" said Kitty Cat, and to escape Katy's flying broom she jumped through the skylight and right into a drain pipe. The drain pipe ran down the side of the house, as drain pipes do. "Oh! Oh! Oh!" gasped the pussy cat. Down, down, down she went, down the cellar window and in. She lay sniffing and sneezing in a coal heap.

Melissa Mouse was cleaning her teeth. "Well, green cheese and chocolate drops!" she squealed. "Where on earth did you come from?"

"Meow . . . kerchoo . . . meow . . . kerchoo!" was all Kitty Cat could answer.

"Oh, you've got a cold!" said Melissa. "That's too bad. I'll get you some cough drops," and she scampered to her cozy home under the pickle shelf and came back with a box of cough drops, a bottle of liniment, and a jar of goose grease.

"You shouldn't be out on a night like this, Kitty Cat, with a cold like that," said Melissa, as she rubbed the goose grease into the kitty's aching chest. "'Twould suit you much better to stay home under the kitchen stove."

Kitty sneezed, and then she snuffled, and then she sniffled, and her eyes that were puffy filled with tears. Her coat that was roughy shivered with cold. Her nose that was snuffy dropped a little

drop in the coal heap, and she cried: "I wanted to stay in, but Katy Kinsella wouldn't let me. She put me out."

"She did?"

"Yes, she did."

"Why?"

"'Cause she doesn't want any kerchooing cats in her kitchen."

"It's too bad about her," said Melissa Mouse. "It's just too bad about her. I bet her mistress doesn't put her out every time she sneezes. I'd just go back in if I were you. I would, indeed."

"I did. I went in the window and the door and the drain pipe, and, Melissa . . . I'm sick."

Melissa tied her tail into a beautiful bow knot and sat down to think. It wasn't hard for Melissa to think either, for Melissa was a smart mouse. "I know, Kitty Cat," she said. "You go into the garden, climb up on the garden wall and yowl and yowl and yowl until she lets you in. Nobody can put up with your yowling for very long."

"Well, I can cry, but I don't think it will do any good. She's made up her mind."

But Kitty Cat climbed the garden wall, and she yowled, and she yowled, until Katy Kinsella stopped her rocking, dropped her knitting, and put wool in her ears.

"It's no use, Melissa. I tell you it's no use. And my eyes are getting puffier, and my nose is getting snuffier every minute."



"There's a hole under the kitchen sink, Kitty Cat," said Melissa. "You climb up the water pipe, you'll find the hole. Squeeze through, and you'll be in the kitchen quicker than I can say green cheese and chocolate drops."

Kitty smiled wryly. "That's alright for you, Melissa, but I'm a cat. I can't get through a mouse hole, and anyway, if Katy saw anything coming out of a mouse hole she'd be so scared she'd just . . ."

It was then Melissa had an idea. She began to laugh, and she laughed, and she laughed, and she laughed till every cobweb in the cellar swung to and fro like fairy hammocks. "Stupid me, stupid me!" she said, as she stopped for breath. "I know what to do. I'll visit Katy Kinsella."

"But what good will that do me?" sighed Kitty Cat.

"You just wait and see," said Melissa, reaching for her roller skates. "You just wait and see."

Melissa laughed again, and straightening the seams on her tiny silk stockings, and patting a last dab of powder on her little nose, she ran up the water pipe and into Katy Kinsella's kitchen. Katy still rocked and knitted and rocked and knitted.

Melissa looked about her. The coast was clear. So she sat down under the sink and fastened on her skates.

"Whee-ee-ee-ee-ee-ee," she cried, and she rolled right up to Katy Kinsella's rocking chair and took a flying leap over the ball of yellow yarn and coasted over the green linoleum on Katy Kinsella's kitchen floor.

"Help!" screamed Katy, and *she* took a flying leap over the ball of yellow yarn and landed on the kitchen table right in the midst of a heap of dishes she had placed there for breakfast use. "Help!" she cried again. "Help! A mouse . . ."

"Whee-ee-ee . . .," said Melissa, and she whizzed once more past the frightened Katy Kinsella. She cut a few figures on her skates, and then she said to herself: "I must go down and tell Kitty Cat."

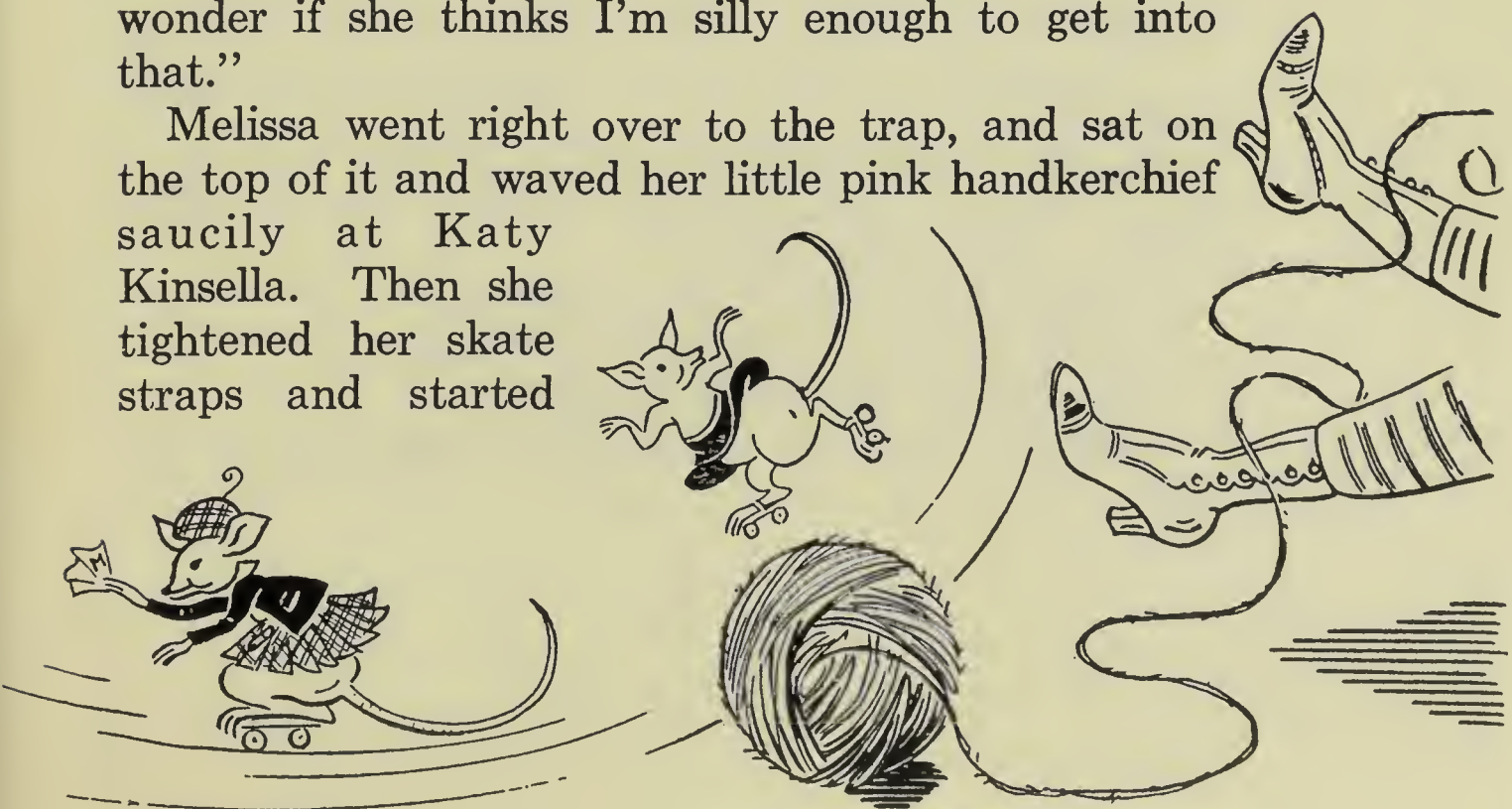
She slid down the pipe to the sneezing pussy.

"Go on up into the yard, Kitty Cat. She'll soon be letting you in," laughed the naughty Melissa. "She's frightened to death of me. You should have seen her. She almost landed in the sugar bowl."

While Melissa was gone, Katy Kinsella was busy. She set a trap—a little round red trap with four holes. "That'll catch you," she said.

But when Melissa stuck her head out of the hole she saw the trap right away. "Um-m-m-m-m," said the mouse. "Just what I expected. Now I wonder if she thinks I'm silly enough to get into that."

Melissa went right over to the trap, and sat on the top of it and waved her little pink handkerchief saucily at Katy Kinsella. Then she tightened her skate straps and started



off again. Right over the top of Katy's shining brown boot she leaped, singing, "Tral-la-la-la. I like your nice clean house. Tral-la-la-lal-la. My name is Melissa Mouse. Whee-ee!"

"Help!" screamed Katy Kinsella, and she got the broom. She chased Melissa into the pantry and out, down the hall and out, into the parlour and out, up the hall and out. "Whee-ee," sang Melissa.

"Oh!" cried Katy Kinsella. "What shall I do? What shall I do?"

Melissa's cousin, Arabella, heard her screams, so she left her nibbling in the flour-bin to join the fun. She put on *her* roller skates and followed Melissa.

"Help! Help! Oh, help!" screamed Katy Kinsella when she saw Arabella; and she screamed so loudly that the fat policeman who was going by on his beat heard her, and he came running into the house.

"What is it, Katy Kinsella?" he asked. "What is it? Burglars?"

"No . . . mice!"

"Mice?"

"Yes, mice. My house is being overrun. What shall I do?"

It did not take the fat policeman long to answer that. "Get a cat," he said.

"I have a cat," said Katy Kinsella.

"Where is she?" asked the policeman.

"Outdoors," said Katy Kinsella.

"Umph!" said the policeman. "Well, bring her in."

Melissa winked at Arabella. Arabella winked at the policeman. The policeman winked at Katy Kinsella, who winked into the darkness, calling: "Here, kitty, kitty, kitty!"



"Make her coax you," called Melissa to Kitty Cat, as she slid down the water pipe. "Make her coax you."

"Here kitty, kitty, kitty!" called Katy again.

"Meow," said Kitty Cat.

"Come on in, kitty," said Katy. "Katy wants you to catch a mouse."

"N-Neow," said Kitty Cat.

"I'll give you a nice dish of bread and milk if you'll come in."

"N-Neow," said Kitty Cat.

"I'll give you some nice fresh salmon out of a pretty can," said Katy.

"Neow," said Kitty Cat.

"Well . . . I'll . . . I'll let you sit under the kitchen stove and sneeze all you like, if you'll just come in," said Katy.

At that, puffing and snuffing, Katy Kinsella's kitty cat went back into the kitchen.



Little Brown Dog

He was a little dog, a nice little dog, a nice little brown dog, and he had no name. But he had the funniest, chummiest, runniest way of hopping about on three feet that you ever saw. And people would stop to look after him, and he'd run and run and run, and then he'd run.

But to-night he was standing still. Yes, standing still, mind you . . . the little dog, the nice little dog, the nice little brown dog who had always run and run. He had made a discovery. It was Christmas. There was a Santa Claus; and he, the little brown dog, had no stockings. He sniffed, and then he sniffed again, and then he barked at the moon. And it shone and shone and shone in its silvery way, and then it blinked sadly to the stars and said: "He has no stockings to hang. Too bad! Too bad!"

"He has no stockings to hang? How sad! How sad!" And the stars told the church steeples, and the church steeples rang out: "No stockings . . . no stockings . . . no stockings." And the houses creaked

dully in the frost and said to the little dog, the nice little dog, the nice little brown dog: "You've no stockings to hang, and this Christmas Eve? But you must find some right away. Hurry, little dog! Hurry! Santa is already on his way." And the little dog ran and ran and ran, and then he ran.

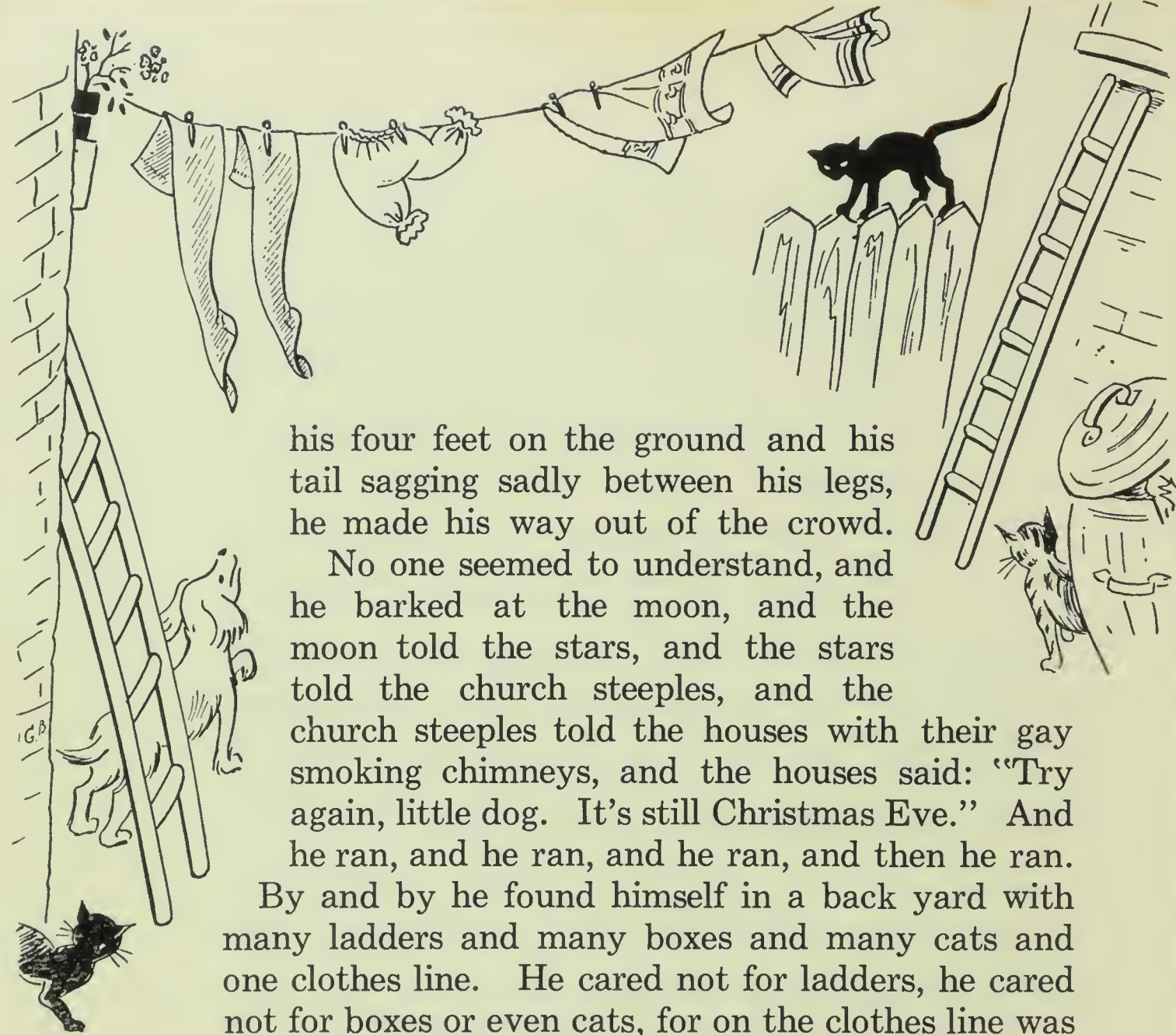
"I will go to the stores," he said, "and I will get some stockings."

The streets were brimming with shoppers, now here, now there. Laughing voices, sad voices, loud voices, soft voices, all called the message "Merry Christmas." The little dog who had no name hopped along on the curbstone. There was no room on the pavement. Once a bit of holly fell from a soft brown muff, and the little dog picked it up with his strong white teeth and held it and ran on. That was his way of saying, "Merry Christmas."

Then he saw a stocking shop. The red and green lights flashed STOCKING . . . STOCKING . Now Santa Claus would come to him.

He went into the store. How busy it was, and how little he was! But he put his two brown front paws up against the counter, and he gave two of his most polite little barks: "Bow, wow," which said: "Stockings, please." And everyone laughed and said: "Oh, see the little dog, the nice little dog, the nice little brown dog!" and they opened the door and gently pushed him out into the night.

And the holly fell, and his hopes fell. "Merry Christmas!" he cried. "How can I have a Merry Christmas with no stockings to hang?" And with



his four feet on the ground and his tail sagging sadly between his legs, he made his way out of the crowd.

No one seemed to understand, and he barked at the moon, and the moon told the stars, and the stars told the church steeples, and the church steeples told the houses with their gay smoking chimneys, and the houses said: "Try again, little dog. It's still Christmas Eve." And he ran, and he ran, and he ran, and then he ran.


By and by he found himself in a back yard with many ladders and many boxes and many cats and one clothes line. He cared not for ladders, he cared not for boxes or even cats, for on the clothes line was a pair of stockings.

The moon blinked excitedly, the stars twinkled, and the church steeples called to the houses: "He has found some stockings," and they all said together: "Jump, little dog! Jump! Jump!" The little dog jumped, but he could not reach the stockings. But every time he jumped he got a little nearer, until at last he had the toe of one between those sharp white teeth. Just then an angry voice called from a window above: "Go away! Go away!"

"But I must have them," barked the little dog.
"It's Christmas Eve, and I've no stockings to hang."

But the angry voice continued: "Go away, I say!
Go away! My good stockings! The idea!"

And the little dog, the nice little dog, the nice little brown dog went out of the yard, and still stockingless, he went down the street. The evening was wearing away. A darkness crossed the moon, and the little dog looked up. He could see the shadow of Santa's sleigh and Santa's reindeer and of Santa himself. And then he cried. Ah, the poor little dog, the nice little dog, the nice little brown dog!

 "It's too late now," he said, "too late. Bow, wow . . . wow . . . wow."

But the tall pine tree on the edge of the parkway would put up with no such nonsense.

"Shame on you, little dog, shame! There are still four hours to midnight, and Santa Claus has not yet reached the earth."

"But I've no stockings to hang," said the little dog.

"Humph!" said the tree. "The town is full of stockings."

"Ah, wow . . . wow . . . wow . . . wow."

"Shame."

"But what shall I do?" asked the little dog, the nice little dog, the nice little brown dog.

"Haven't you any friends?" asked the tree.

"Yes," said the little dog.

"Who are they?" said the tree.

"The moon."

"She has no stockings."

"The stars."

"They have no stockings."

"The church steeples."

"Humph!"

"The houses."

"The *houses*? . . . the houses?"

"Yes," said the little brown dog, not knowing whether to feel happy or not.

"Well, go to them, stupid," said the tree. "Go to the friendliest house in town."

"Yes," said the little dog, and he ran, and he ran, and he ran, and he ran. Then he stood still in front of a little white house with green shutters and smiling window-panes. Here was the friendliest house in town. And over the roof-tops the tree sang: "Go in," and the little dog did. Once on the steps, he felt suddenly brave, and with his brown paw he gave three brown taps on the big brown door.

A laughing voice rang out: "Someone is tapping on my wee small door."

"More Christmas presents," called another friendly voice.

"Lift up the latch and walk in," said yet another voice.

But the little dog couldn't, so he gave three more taps, and he waited. The door was thrown wide, and a small girl bowed low. "Why, good evening, little dog. Oh, you nice little dog, you nice little brown dog, come in!"



"Who is it, Molly May?" asked someone hiding in the great low chair in front of the fireplace.

"It's a little brown dog, Gramp, and he seems to want something."

Ah, here were people who understood. So he lifted his front paw off the ground, and on three legs he went happily towards the big chair.

"Merry Christmas, little fellow!" said Gramp.

"Bow, wow," answered the little visitor, and he rolled on the great fur rug in the firelight and smiled up at Gramp and Molly May. Molly May ran to the kitchen and came back with a bowl of rich yellow milk. She thought he was hungry. She *didn't* understand after all. But he must tell these people somehow. The clock struck nine.

"Santa'll soon be here, little dog," said Molly May. "Drink up your milk and go home to your mummy." But the little dog wouldn't.

"He's not hungry," said the old man.

"Maybe he's cold," said Molly May's father. "Are you cold little dog?" And the little dog said "No."

"I know," said Molly May, "he wants a ribbon for his neck. Is that it, little dog?" And the little dog said, "No." And then . . . then he saw just what he wanted. Stockings! Just above the fireplace and just below the mantle clock hung five stockings in a row—a big one, a little one, a long one, a short one, and Gramp's. The little dog began to bark, and he barked, and he barked, and he barked, and he barked, and then he barked, and Gramp

laughed. He slapped his hand on his knees and laughed again, and he laughed till the tears rolled down his jolly old face. "He wants a stocking," said Gramp.

"Bow, wow," said the little dog.

"To hang for Santa Claus."

"Bow, wow," said the little dog, and he rolled on the rug, and he wagged his tail, and he wiggled his ears, and he laughed out loud. And Molly May laughed, and Molly May's father laughed, and Gramp got out of his low chair by the fireplace and took his own great wool sock from its place on the mantle and placed it in front of the little dog.

The little dog licked Gramp's hands to say "thank you," and with shining eyes he picked up the sock in his mouth and stood in front of the door. Gramp opened it for him, and out into the moonlight went the little dog with his Christmas stocking.

The pine tree bowed and whispered: "Good work, little dog." And the houses told the church steeples, and the church steeples told the stars, and the stars told the moon, and the whole world was brighter than it had ever been before. The last of the Christmas shoppers said: "What a beautiful night!" They didn't know that the heavens were shining out their gladness for a nameless little dog who had just got a Christmas stocking.

And down the street the little dog ran, and he ran, and he ran, and he ran, and then he ran. And then he stood still. For he was home, and his home was in a piano box on the city wharves.

The clock struck the midnight hour. The little dog was just in time. He hung his stocking, and he waited, breathlessly, for fear something yet might happen. He heard bells . . . bells . . . bells . . . and then a mighty WHOA filled the air. It was Santa Claus.

"Well, well, well, well, here's a fine stocking hung in the moonlight. Let's see, who lives here? Oh, yes! the little brown dog. Now I wonder what a little brown dog would like. Perhaps a bone to gnaw."

"Bow, wow," whispered the little dog.

"A ball to roll."

"Bow, wow," whispered the little dog.

"And a barley toy to lick."

"Bow, wow," whispered the little dog.

"And another bone to gnaw."

"Bow, wow," said the happy little dog.

And then Santa Claus drove away towards the friendly houses where the children live. And the little dog, with his paws around his Christmas stocking, fell sound asleep to dream of happy to-morrows, when he'd run and run and run and then run.

He was just a little dog, a nice little dog, a nice little brown dog.





The Chick and the Child

Once upon a time, there lived a chick and a child; and the chick was Nicky, and the child was Dibby. And the chick loved the child, and the child loved the chick, for they each loved the other.

The chick had two little strong legs, two little white wings, and two little speckled feathers in a very saucy white tail. The child had two little brown eyes, two little red lips, and two little black braids on a very pretty little head. And one braid pointed north, and one braid pointed south; but Dibby went east and west, for Dibby always faced the sun. And when she sang, she always sang of a fat little pony with golden shoes, and this was her song:

*Golden Shoes! My pony's name is golden shoes.
I always ride him in my dreams,
Until he's almost real it seems.*

Golden Shoes! My pony's name is Golden Shoes.

When you saw Dibby, you saw Nicky Chick; they were always together.

To find their house you would go up a hill and over, into a valley and through and down a grassy lane. There, on the edge of a woodland, sat their little white house.

While Dibby helped Mommy in the little white house, Nicky Chick would scratch for worms, but when Dibby's work was over, worms were forgotten. And *up* the grassy lane, into the valley and through and over the hill and *down* would go the chick and the child.

"Here come Dibby and Nicky Chick," said the policeman, as he swung back and forth in his shiny black boots.

"See her pigtails," said the blacksmith, and he blew his great bellows into the fire. "They point north and south."

"Yes," said the policeman, "but Dibby goes east and west, for she always faces the sun . . . Hello, Dibby," he said, as the chick and the child stopped to watch the smithy at his work. "How are you to-day?"

"Oh, we're fine, aren't we, Nicky?" And Nicky flicked a happy *yes* with his saucy white tail with the two speckled feathers.

"Do you want to have your chicken shod, Miss Dibby?" asked the smithy.

"No, thank you, Mr. Smithy, but I'd like you to make golden shoes for my pony."

"Umm, um . . ." said the policeman. "Now



there's a big order for you, Smithy. Have you a pony now too, Miss Dibby?"

"No, but some day maybe I shall, if I keep wishing hard enough. You never can tell."

"That's right," said the smithy. "You never can tell. I'll get the golden shoes ready, just in case. What size will they be?"

"Just the size of the loveliest pony that ever went round the world. There'll be four of them—shoes I mean."

"Right," said the smithy. "I'll make a note of it." And he did.

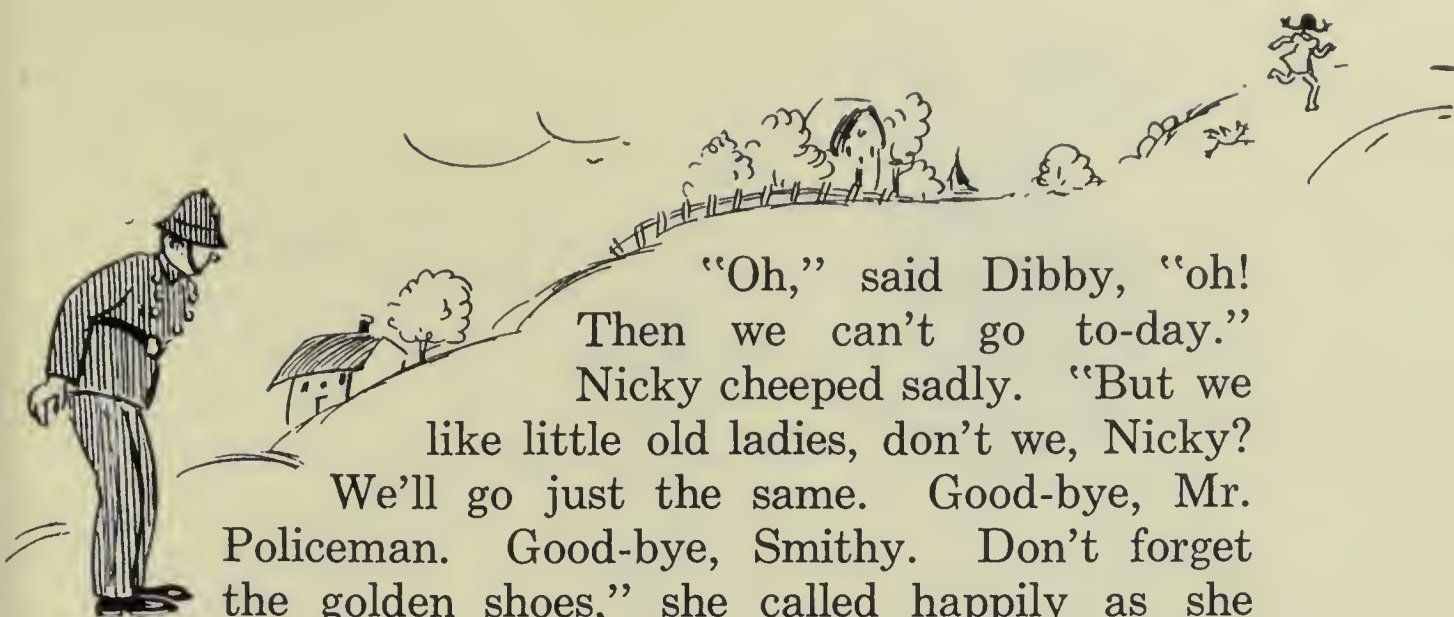
"Where are you off to to-day, may I ask?" said the policeman.

"Oh, we're going back up to the great empty house up yonder. Nobody lives there, you know, and it's so pretty there. There are flowers and bees and lots of worms for Nicky."

"I shouldn't go there to-day, if I were you," said the policeman, "not to-day. No, I shouldn't go to-day."

Dibby's little face flushed. "But we don't hurt anything, Mr. Policeman, and there's nobody there to bother. We just squirm in under the gate and play along the paths, and we don't even touch the flowers—just look at them. Course Nicky does catch a fly once in a while, but nobody'd mind that."

The policeman swung once more in his shining black boots. He looked up the street and then down, and then he bent and whispered: "The little old lady up at the great house is come home again."



"Oh," said Dibby, "oh!
Then we can't go to-day."

Nicky cheeped sadly. "But we
like little old ladies, don't we, Nicky?

We'll go just the same. Good-bye, Mr.
Policeman. Good-bye, Smithy. Don't forget
the golden shoes," she called happily as she
danced along the pavement followed by a
hopping Nicky. The policeman looked at the
smithy, the smithy looked at the policeman, and
they both shook their heads as they looked after
Dibby, who was dancing towards the sun.

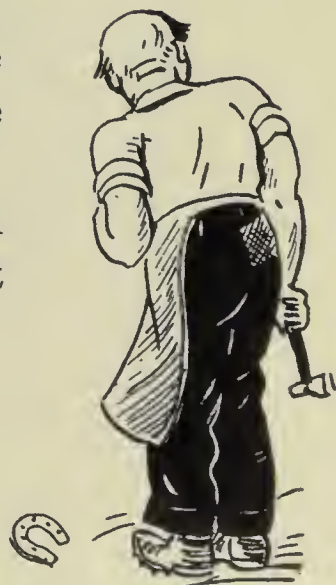
Under the great gate squirmed the chick and the
child. Over the cobble stones went the chick and
the child. And then Dibby said: "It's a lovely
day, Nicky. I think I'll sing a song:

*Golden Shoes! My pony's name is Golden Shoes.
I always ride him in my dreams,
Until he's almost real it seems.*

Golden Shoes! My pony's name is Golden Shoes."

Her piping notes reached the ears of the little old
lady, who sat, tight-lipped and unsmiling, on the
porch of the great white house. Her old face grew
red with anger. Who had a right to be happy near
her? How dared anyone to sing in her garden?
Her silken skirts rustled, her gold-headed cane
pounded angrily on the cobble stones, as she
made her way towards the chick and the child.

"What are you doing here?" she said. "You
saucy child! Take yourself and that . . . that





scratching hen off my premises, and never come here again . . . never I say . . . never."

"But, Mrs. Great House, I'm not a saucy child," said Dibby.

"You are. You are impudent and bold."

"But I'm not . . . really. I'm Dibby, and this is Nicky Chick. We live up the hill and over, into the valley and through and down the grassy lane."

"I don't care who you are, or where you live. Go, and take the hen with you. He's digging up my whole garden."

"He's a chicken, Mrs. Great House, and he just took one worm for his dinner, but if you want it, you can have it. Can't she, Nicky? Here!" And Dibby held out the long wiggling worm towards the irate old lady.

"Go . . . go, I tell you." And Nicky Chick and Dibby went quickly back along the cobble stones, to where the policeman still stood swinging in his shining black boots.

"What?" he said. "Back so soon?" and he winked at the smithy. "Did you have a nice time?"

"No, I didn't," said Dibby. "She . . . the old lady was . . . well, she didn't like Nicky and me. Mr. Policeman, what makes her so cross?"

The policeman lifted his blue cap and scratched his head. He was thinking. Then he answered: "I don't know . . . I don't know what makes her so cross. What do you think, Smithy?"

"I think it's because she has no sunshine in her life," said the smithy.

"You're right. That's it," said the policeman. "No sunshine . . . no sunshine."

"Oh!" said Dibby. "Come, Nicky." And up the hill and over they went into the valley and through and down the grassy lane, and home.

"Mommy," said Dibby, that night as she knelt to say her prayers, "Mommy, what makes the old lady at the great house so cross?"

"Well, honey," said Mommy, "I don't exactly know. She has everything money can buy. It's just . . . that . . . well . . . she has no sunshine in her life."

"Oh! Then the policeman and the smithy were right. It's bad not to have sunshine, isn't it, Mommy?"

"It's very bad," said Mommy. "And now you go to sleep, honey, for you know Nicky is always up with the dawn."

The *dawn!* that's when the sun woke. She—Dibby—must get up at the dawn to-morrow too.

Poor old lady, she must help her. "I'll get her a kettle of sunshine, from the dawn. That's when it's gray and rosy, just the kind of sunshine an old lady would like."

Dibby slept. But when came the dawn, the chick and the child stood facing the rising sun with a bright kettle to catch its light. When it was full to the brim, they tightly closed the lid and went up the grassy lane, into the valley and through, over the hill and down to the great house. Under the gate they squirmed, over the cobble stones they clattered, up to the front door they went and raised the big brass knocker. The little old lady herself answered, her silken skirts still rustling, her cane still pounding.

"Good-morning," said Dibby. Nicky Chick flicked his tail.

"*Good-morning*, indeed. I don't see anything good about it, and I told you not to come back here with that scratching hen."

"But we've brought you something," said Dibby.

"I don't need anything," snapped the old lady.

"Oh, no!" said Dibby. "You're rich, aren't you?"

"Yes," snapped the old lady again.

"Well, why don't you buy a pony then with

*Golden Shoes! My pony's name is Golden Shoes.
I always ride him in my dreams,
Until he's almost real it seems.
Golden Shoes! My pony's name is Golden Shoes.*

Oh, excuse me! I . . . I didn't mean to sing. It . . . it just sort of slipped out."

"I suppose so, and what would I do with a pony, pray?"

"Ride him," said Dibby. "You could go all around the world and then come back to the blacksmith shop, and see the policeman. Wouldn't that be fun?"

"I don't know. I don't have fun," said the old lady.

"But you're going to have, from now on," said Dibby, "because we've brought you a kettle of sunshine, Nicky and I. It's gray and rosy. We got it from the dawn. You need *it*, don't you?"

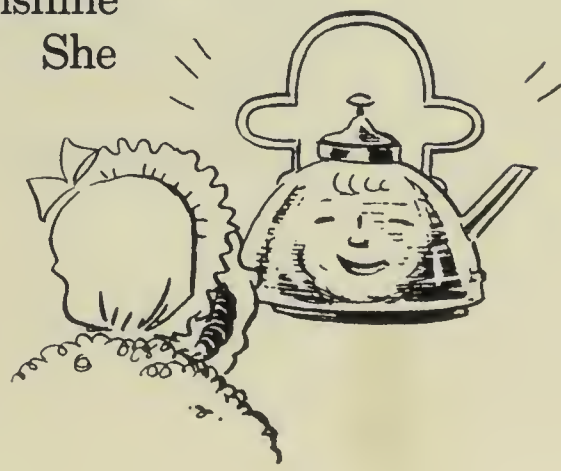
The old lady's face softened. A tear fell from her hard old eyes. "Yes, child, I do need it, thank you."

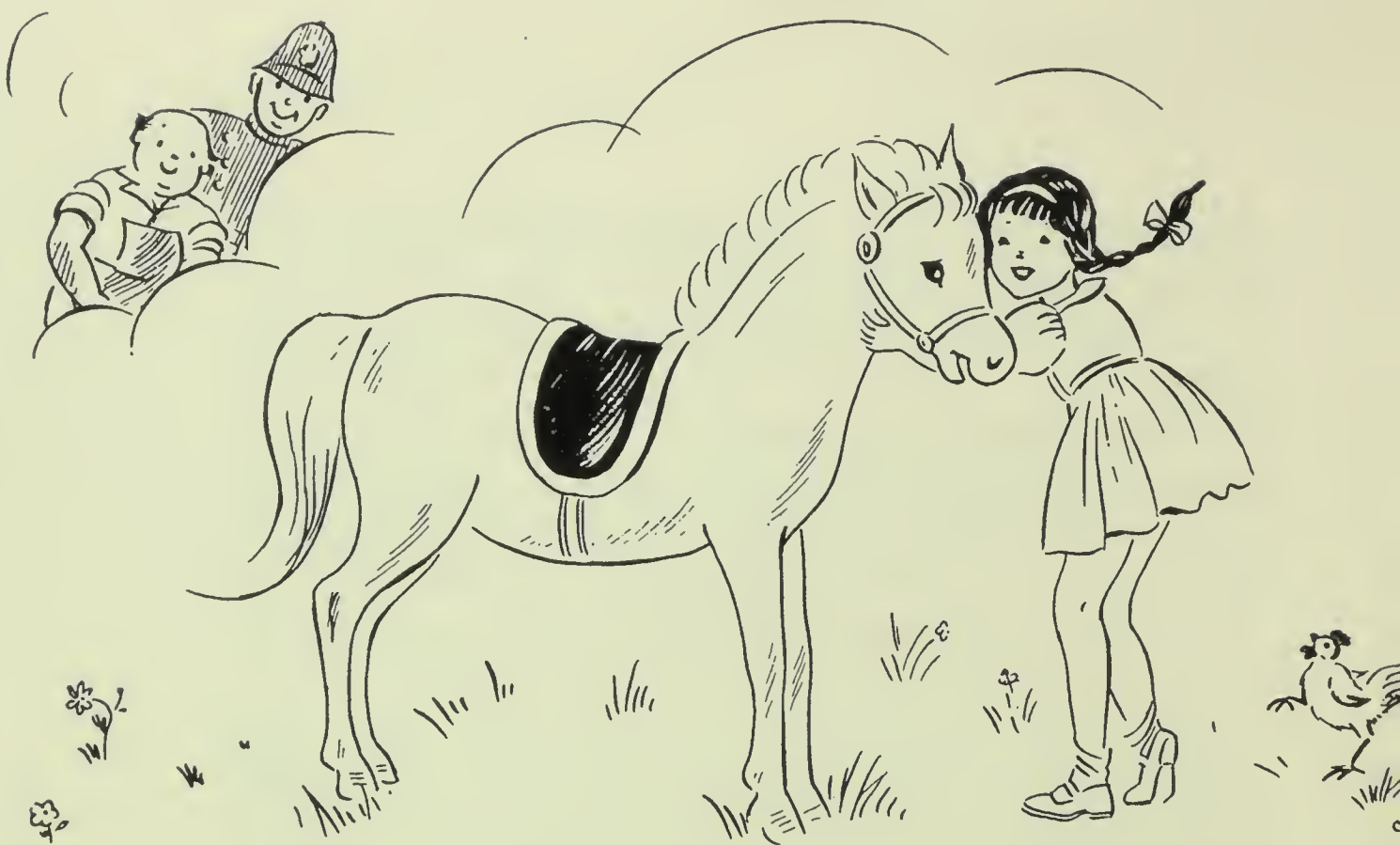
She lifted the lid from the old tin kettle, and a beautiful smile settled on her old face. And then she laughed . . . *laughed*, mind you . . . the old lady in the great house, who hadn't laughed in years. "May I keep this kettle, Dibby?"

"Yes," said Dibby, "it's a nice kettle, but you may keep it. I guess you need it more than Nicky and I do."

"I guess I do," said the old lady, and then she went on: "I'll tell you. I'll make a bargain with you. You give me the sunshine kettle, and I'll give you . . ." She stopped.

"What?" said Dibby.





"Never mind now. Stop in at the smithy's tomorrow and see. I'll leave it there for you." She closed the great white door, and hugging her kettle to her, she climbed the broad staircase murmuring, "A kettle of sunshine. God bless the chick and the child."

Once more with the dawn, the chick and the child went to the smithy's shop. And there was the policeman swinging in his shining black boots. "You're early to-day, Dibby," and he winked again at the smithy.

"Well, we couldn't wait any longer. You see the little old lady . . . Oh . . . oh!" gasped Dibby. Nicky flew to the policeman's shoulder. "Oh . . . a pony . . . a real live pony! Who . . . who owns him, Mr. Blacksmith?"

"He belongs to a chick and a child. A little old lady left him here for them."

"Mine and Nicky's . . . for a kettle of sunshine. Not . . . not just for a kettle of sunshine?"

"For a kettle of sunshine," said the smithy. "And she said she was getting the best of the bargain."

"He's got Golden Shoes," said the child.

"That's his name," said the policeman, as he lifted Dibby and Nicky Chick to the fat pony's brown back. "Now, away around the world with you!"

"Yes," said Dibby. "But we must show Mommy first. We must go to Mommy first."

So up the hill and over, into the valley and through and down the grassy lane went Nicky Chick, Dibby, and "Golden Shoes! The pony's name is Golden Shoes." The pigtails were pointing north and south, but Dibby was riding with her face towards the sun.

And that's the story of the chick and the child, who lived once upon a time.

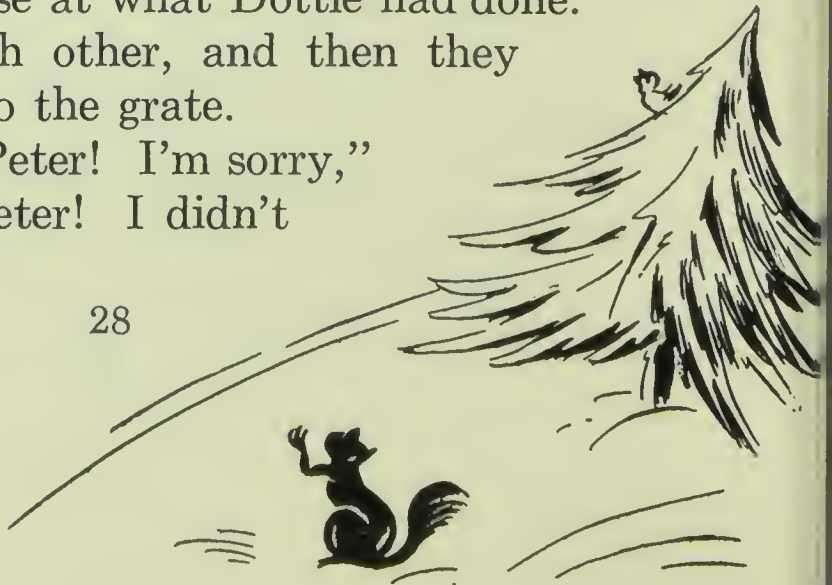


The Gift of Lady Moon

Peter Lawrence really went to the moon. It's a queer story, and it's not my fault that it begins: "It is." "It is not." "It is!"

"Well, then, we'll see if it's real snow," and Dottie Dawson threw the beautiful green glassy into the fireplace. The flames sputtered and spat and licked at the green globe, and the two children stood there in surprise at what Dottie had done. They looked at each other, and then they stared unhappily into the grate.

"Oh, Peter! Oh, Peter! I'm sorry," said Dottie. "Oh, Peter! I didn't mean to . . . I . . ."



Peter didn't answer. His lips were tight. His hands were clenched. He stood very, very still. Dottie ran from the room.

You see, it was this way. Peter's grandmother had cleaned out her old brass-trimmed trunk, and down in a far corner she had found this beautiful glassy. It was green and clear, and in its heart was a little white bear. And what do you suppose? When you rolled the glassy on the floor, snow fell on the little bear. Where that snow came from Peter didn't know. He couldn't even guess. He had invited Dottie Dawson to come over to see this prize, and "That's really snow in there, Dottie," he said.

"How do you know?" said the wondering Dottie.

"I just know."

"Well, I don't believe it. If it's really snow, it'll melt."

"Well, it's really snow."

"It is not."

"It is!" And it was then that Dottie had thrown the glassy into the fire just to find out for sure that it was really snow. She hadn't meant to. You know how it is sometimes. And when she ran from the room, Peter went out into the door yard. He swallowed hard, and then he swallowed again.

"I . . . I can't cry. I just can't cry. Hecka-doodle! I'm a boy, and a boy doesn't cry, but . . ." With his tough little brown-mittened hand, he brushed aside a tear that had trickled down his nose.

"Anyway, it's good snowballing," he said. He stooped and filled his hands with wet snow. "Boy! It is good snowballing. I know what I'll do. I'll make a snowball so big it'll reach the moon, and then, Dottie Dawson, see if you can throw it into the fire!"

He went to work. Along the old fence line he rolled his ball, down through the meadow and over the hill, bigger and bigger, harder and harder. Now he had reached the hill-top.

"Heckadoodle! That was some push," he said. "And it's pretty big, but it's a long way from the moon yet."

Supper-time was drawing near. The skiers on the hill across the valley were making their way home.

"I wish my snowball had skis," said Peter to himself. "I could roll it more quickly." He laughed loudly at his thought, and then he heard a snowbird in a nearby hawthorne, whistling a song to the fast setting sun.

"Mr. Snowbird," said the friendly little Peter, "I'm mad at Dottie Dawson. Did you know that? She threw my glassy into the fire, so I'm going to roll this snowball to reach the moon. Will you lend me your wings for a minute or maybe three?"

The snowbird cocked his head saucily on one side, as much as to say, "Silly boy." Peter laughed again.

"You needn't look at me like that, Mr. Snowbird. I mean it . . . honest I do. How'll I ever get to the moon if my snowball moves so slowly?"

The bird cocked his head on the other side and sang: "Ride it . . . ride it . . . ride it."

"What did you say?" gasped Peter.

"Ride it . . . ride it . . . ride it," sang the bird again; and spreading his wings, he flew away in the path of the sun.

Peter jumped to his feet "Ride it, of course. Ride it . . . why didn't I think of that before? I'll ride the snowball like the little bear, only I'll ride it on the outside of the ball instead of the inside. Hurrah for you, Mr. Snowbird!"

Peter made a running leap and landed on the top of the big ball of snow. He started it on its downward way. Over and over it rolled, and over and over again. What fun! What fun! Faster, faster, on and on it went, and on and on danced Peter. Children shouted in glee as he passed them, on and on to the foot of the hill, on and on and *up*. Yes, *up*, for the ball was gathering snow as it rolled.

"Oh, this is fun! This is fun!"

Peter waved to the chickadees. He waved to the squirrels. On and on he went. He was out of the woods. He could no longer see the tree-tops, and then . . . then . . .

"Help! Help!" called Peter, for a great golden sword, sharp and shining, seemed to be coming right towards him.

"Duck," cried someone.

Peter ducked. He lay flat on his stomach and sank his mittened fingers into the soft snow. And



then he looked up. "Oh, oh!" he cried, "where have I got myself?"

He was in a world of golden swords, all sharp and twinkling, and everywhere. Again he buried his face in the ball of snow. "Oh, oh, oh, oh!" he sobbed. "I shouldn't have come wherever this is that I am."

"Don't be afraid, Peter," called a soft voice. "They will not hurt you. You said you were riding to the moon, and here you are."

This voice was so kind that Peter dared again to look up. It was the Lady of the Moon who spoke. He really had made his snowball reach the sky.

The lovely lady took his hand, and he stepped from the snowball right onto the moon. Peter laughed. "I'm . . . I'm not afraid any more. I . . . it was just the golden swords. You see . . . I . . ."

The Lady of the Moon laughed a laugh as silvery as her beautiful gown.

"Those aren't swords, Peter," she said. "Those are the stars—the points of the stars."

"Oh, my stars!" laughed Peter. "I love the stars, but I just didn't know. I guess I was afraid because, you see, I never was away from home before, and got kind of scary, and you see Dottie threw my glassy into the fire, and . . ." He stopped to listen. He heard bells . . . bells . . . beautiful bells, tinkling a quaint merry tune.

"Who is it, Lady Moon?" he asked. "What is it? Where does it come from?"

"The dairy maids are bringing the cows home along the Milky Way," said the silver lady of the sky.

"Good-evening, Mother Moon," said one of the little maids. "It's been a lovely day, and all the earth children have been good."

Peter was going to tell her that Dottie Dawson hadn't been good, that Dottie had been . . . But he stopped; he wasn't going to be a tattle-tale, he just guessed. So he closed his red lips tightly and watched the cows being led into the shelter of their big dark barn. That barn is the big dark mouth on the face of the moon. Have you noticed it?

Soon the milking was over for another day. The dairy maids poured their quarts of gold and cream into the starry dipper that hung nearby in the sky. Peter licked his lips at its yellow richness. He was hungry. He just remembered he had had no supper.

"Not even an apple," he told Lady Moon.

"Now that's too bad," laughed the lovely lady. "Frolic," she called to a tiny star, "bring Peter a bit of angel cake, will you?"

"Um-mm, that's good," said Peter, and as he munched it, he sat at the moon's feet, and she stroked his hair.

"What a nice child," she thought, "this child of the earth! I will shine for him always. I will try to guide him on the right path through life. He is so young to-day, and he's lost his glassy."

The Great Bear suddenly growled. Peter was startled, and he reached for the lady's hand. "It's



THE GIFT OF LADY MOON

just the Great Bear, Peter. You've seen him, haven't you?"

"Oh, yes, so I have! My daddy finds him for me in the sky, but I've never heard him growl before. Do you think maybe he might be the daddy of my little wee white bear that lived in my green glassy?"

"He might," laughed the Lady of the Moon. "He might. And who knows but he might have a weenty bear in his den that we could roll into another glassy? We'll ask him." She did, and the Great Bear gave them a tiny white cub.

"Oh, oh, oh!" gasped Peter. "He's so sweet. I will love him in my glassy. But where will we get the green glass to put around him?"

"The Northern Lights will give us colour."

They had no green to spare, but they gladly gave rose colour to the making of a new glassy. The stars gave some of their twinkle for a snow-storm. The moon's silver was the glass, and soon Peter had in his hands a beautiful new glassy—a gift from Lady Moon. He was so excited, he dropped it. Down, down, down it went.

"You will find it, Peter," said the lady. "It will be at home."

And now Peter wanted to go home. You know how you are. When you get something new, you want to go right home and show it to Mother . . . yes, and to Dottie Dawson, too. But somehow he was no longer cross with Dottie.

The Lady Moon kissed him gently as he stepped back on his ball once more. "Good luck, Earth

Child," she said, "and may your guiding star be one of kindness, health, and goodness! Now away back with you to your earth home!"

"I . . . I'm kind of tired, Lady Moon," said Peter. "Could . . . maybe would one of the stars give me a little push just so's . . ."

"Sit still. Sit still, Peter," called a bright voice from behind a hill-top. "I'll attend to that."

"It's the sun," smiled the moon, and the sun smiled too, and as he did, the snowball began to change its shape. It grew smaller and smaller and smaller until . . . well, here was Peter, back in his own yard again.

He ran into the house. There on the table was a big rose-coloured glassy. Inside of it was a little bear. He rolled it. *Snow!*

"Dottie was sorry about your glassy, Peter," said his mother. "She brought you another. She could not get you a green one, so . . ."

"Mother," said Peter quietly, "you can't fool me. Dottie didn't bring me this glassy."

"No?" said Mother.

"No, it was the gift of Lady Moon." And going to the window, Peter smiled his thanks to his friend in the sky. She tossed her silver head. The little stars twinkled, and the dairy maids tripped lightly along the Milky Way.

So that is the way the story ends that started: "It is." "It isn't." "It is!" Or was it? I don't know, do you?





Blue Breeches

When I was so little that I just reached that second freckle on the end of your nose, the most exciting thing happened to me. An angel looked into God's pantry, and finding there one of His most beautiful of days, he took it from its place on the shelf and sent it to earth. And because I was so little (just to the second freckle, remember) I thought the day was all for me, so I set out with my little dog to use every bit of it, before came bedtime.

We danced along a woodland path, did Doggie and I, hearing every bird-song, smelling every flower, chasing every butterfly. T'was when we got so very still that we heard a skipety, skipety, skip, skip, skip; skipety, skipety, skipety, skip, skip, skip. And we saw a lean little, clean little brown bear. And he was singing:

*"Oh, I want breeches blue,
Breeches, breeches, breeches blue.
If I don't get breeches blue,
I don't know what I'll do."*

We were so surprised to see him, Doggie and I, and he was so surprised to see us. And I said: "Oh," and he said: "Grr," and Doggie said: "Bow, wow," and we looked at each other, and then we laughed. For we could see we needn't be frightened of each other. We could see that we could all be friends on this beautiful day the angel had sent.

So I said: "Hello, little bear," and he said: "Hello, little girl; hello, little dog." He had twice as much to say, for there were two of us and only one of him. And I said: "What's your name, little bear?" And what do you suppose he told me? Aloysius!

"Aloysius!" I said. And the little dog laughed. "I beg his pardon," I said, "but Aloysius is a funny name for a little bear, isn't it?"

"Well, I guess I'm a funny bear," he said, "for

*Oh, I want breeches blue,
Breeches, breeches, breeches blue.
If I don't get breeches blue,
I don't know what I'll do."*

"Then you meant what you were singing when you were coming down the path?" I said.

"Yes," he said, "I meant it."

Well, my eyes just popped out. (They're in again now, for this all happened long, long ago.)

And I said: "Whatever on earth does a little brown bear want with breeches?"

Aloysius looked at me disgustedly and turned up his little black nose. "I want them to wear," he said. "What does anyone want with breeches?"

And I felt a little silly, and so did Doggie; and I said: "Of course, that's what anyone would want with breeches."

"I'm unhappy, little girl, just because I haven't got them. My mother says little bears don't need breeches; but, little girl, do you know where I'd get some blue breeches?"

I looked at Doggie, and he looked at me, and we both felt very sorry for the lean little, clean little brown bear. And I said I might ask my mother, for she gave me all my things, but I had never ever wanted blue breeches.

And Aloysius said: "Well, will you ask your mother, little girl, will you?" And I said I would, and I wrote a note on a rose leaf, and I sent it home with Doggie, because I didn't want to miss a minute of this beautiful day, and besides, Doggie could run faster than I could.

Aloysius and I sat down on a moss bed and waited, and he told me how he'd tried to make his breeches out of bluebells, but they tore whenever he put the needle in; how he'd climbed the highest tree to reach for a piece of the sky to make his blue breeches, but he'd reached so far up he had fallen down and cut his nose, and for me just to look at the bruises that were still there. I looked, and

then I laughed and said: "They're blue anyway." But he couldn't laugh, he was too busy waiting for the little dog to come back.

And then he told me that old Grandmother Frog had tried to take a pair of blue breeches away from a little boy who was swimming in the pool, but the little boy had chased her and called her names. But I told Aloysius he wouldn't have wanted them anyway, because that would have been stealing.

And then I was going to tell him about the time I wanted the doll with the straw hat, but he said: "Sh . . sh . . listen." And I listened, and I heard clickety, clickety, clickety, clickety, and I knew it was Doggie coming back, for I'd know Doggie's footsteps anywhere.

Did he have the blue breeches? Ah, you're just like Aloysius. You can hardly wait. Well, anyway, he had a neat white box with "Love from Mother" printed on it. And Doggie laid the box at my feet, and he went, "H-h-h," just like that, because he'd run so fast.

Aloysius was very polite. He let me untie the string. But all three of us lifted the cover, and all three of us pushed the tissue paper aside, and there nestling in its crackling folds lay a pair of red braces . . . and oh, happy, happy day! . . . a little pair of blue breeches.

Aloysius's eyes filled with tears. He was so glad he—well, he just couldn't speak. But Doggie understood, and so did I, even if I did just reach that second freckle on your nose. Doggie and I sat

behind a berry bush until Aloysius got the breeches on. But we had to help him with the braces, because he just couldn't seem to reach. And he looked at himself in a nearby stream, and he looked and looked.

"Do you like them, Aloysius?" I said.

"Do I like them! Oh! they're just what I've wanted all this time. Just exactly what I've wanted.

*Now, I have got my breeches blue,
Breeches, breeches, breeches blue.
And now I am so very glad,
I don't know what to do."*

"Well, then," I laughed, "I'll tell you what to do. Go show your breeches to your friends, Aloysius. It's no fun having something beautiful unless you share it."

"You're right, little girl. I'll go a-visiting," said Aloysius.

"May Doggie and I go too?" I asked. I hoped he'd say yes, for Doggie and I had never visited the woodland folk, and this was just the way to do it.

"Of course you may come, little girl. Everybody will want to see the one who gave me my blue breeches."

So Doggie straightened his tail, and I pulled down my sweater, and following Aloysius, we went a-visiting.





The first house we came to was a snug green bungalow cuddling under the side of a hill. It looked very cozy and cheerful, almost as nice as my own home, but not quite. Aloysius rang the bell.

"My grandmother lives here," he whispered. "I could open the door and walk right in, but I want to surprise her."

We waited on the porch, Doggie and I behind Aloysius. We could hear the tap, tap, tap of her gold-headed cane on the polished floor as she made her way to answer the bell. I loved her the minute she threw open the door. I guess that was because her apron was so clean.

She just took one look at Aloysius, and she gathered him into her great furry arms.

"You've got them . . . you've got the . . . Oh, Aloysius, you've got them at last! Come in! Come in, and bring your little friends with you." She could just tell he had gotten his breeches from Doggie and me.

And we had pancakes and honey, and I never saw anyone eat so much honey as Aloysius did.

He ate scoops and scoops of it. And then we said good-bye and went on with our visiting.

"I think I'll visit Mrs. Rabbit next," said Aloysius. That suited Doggie and me, so we pressed the button on the Rabbit door. That little lady nearly wiggled her ears off, she was so glad for Aloysius.

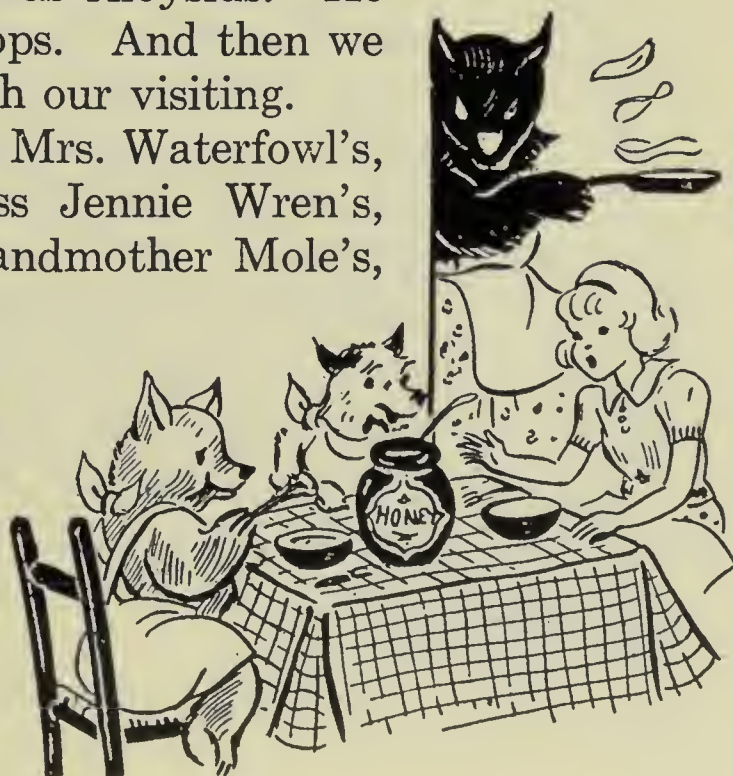
"You know," she said to Doggie and me, "he's wanted blue breeches ever since he was a little fellow. His mother says he doesn't need them, but we all tried to help him. But velvet is so scarce in the woods. The flowers have all there is, and it is so frail. He tried to make them from bluebells once, but I suppose he told you that." I said he had. And then she said: "You must come in and have a bit of lunch to celebrate."

"But we had lunch at Aloysius's grandmother's," I said.

"No difference," said Mrs. Rabbit. "I'll just be very unhappy if you don't lunch with me. It's not every day that Aloysius gets blue breeches."

And she gave us cakes and honey. And I never saw anyone eat so much as Aloysius. He ate scoops and scoops and scoops. And then we said good-bye and went on with our visiting.

We went to Mrs. Mink's and Mrs. Waterfowl's, to Mr. Beaver's and to Miss Jennie Wren's, to Sally Squirrel's and to Grandmother Mole's, and at each of them Aloysius ate a lunch with honey. We just nibbled, did Doggie and I.





And then we went to Flora Fox's. Flora was very beautiful, and she loved nice things, and when she saw the blue breeches and the red braces that were just the colour of her own coat, she screamed with delight.

"Oh, Allie, dear," she said, "you're just too sweet for words!" And she tweaked his nose, and she kissed his ear, and she tickled his chin. Aloysius was wishing he hadn't come . . . we could just tell, Doggie and I. But she really meant well, and she really did like his breeches, because she wished she were a little brown bear and had a pair of breeches like them. And just when we were about to say good-bye she said: "What! Go without a lunch? Tchtch, I won't hear of it. I tell you, I just won't hear of it."

"But," I said, "we've visited Grandmother Bear, and Mrs. Rabbit, Mrs. Mink, and Mrs. Waterfowl, Mr. Beaver and Miss Jennie Wren, Sally Squirrel and Grandmother Mole, and they each gave us a lunch."

"Did they indeed? Well, nobody in this woodland is going to say that Flora Fox didn't give Allie a bit of something the day he got his breeches." And . . . yes, you're right . . . Aloysius ate scoops and scoops and scoops of it. And then we said good-bye.

And then, something happened. And the something happened to Aloysius. He couldn't walk; he just waddled. And then he couldn't even waddle; that little bear was so full of honey he couldn't

even move. And then, we heard a rip, rip, rip. Oh! The blue breeches, the blue breeches split from top to bottom, from right to left; every silken thread gave way. And the braces snapped, and the buttons flew. (One flew so high it hit a chipmunk on the whiskers.) The blue breeches were just in rags.

Aloysius looked at Doggie and me, and he hung his head in shame.

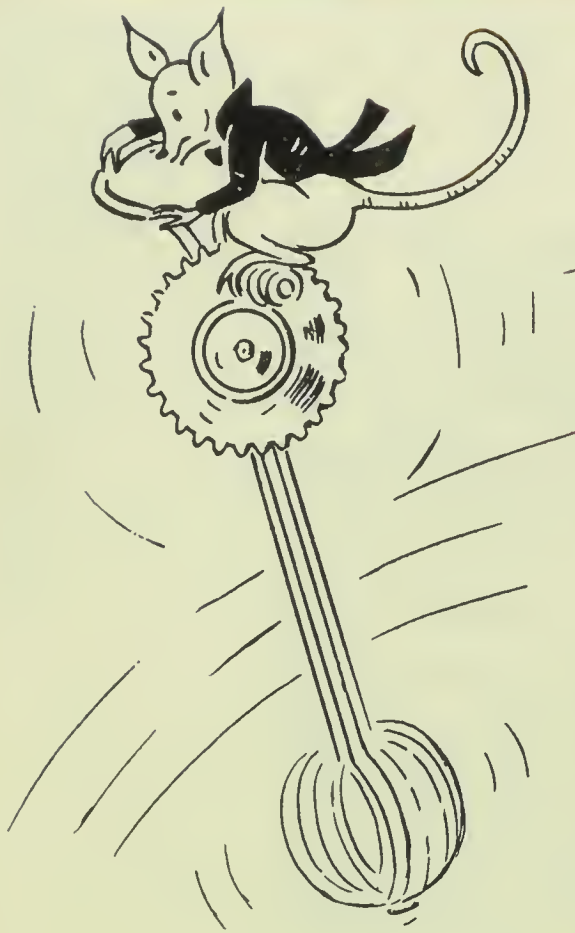
"I don't mind, Aloysius," I hurried to say. "And Doggie doesn't mind. But you . . . it's just that you wanted them so long and so much, and now . . ."

"Now I've found out that my mother was right. Little bears don't need blue breeches. Little bears need room for their honey; and if you can't have honey and breeches . . . well, I'll take the honey." And down the road he went, skipety, skipety, skipety, singing:

*"Well I had my breeches blue,
Thanks to little doggie and you.
But I guess that honey's best,
So I'll forget blue breeches."*

And we've never seen him since, Doggie and I—not since that beautiful day that the angel sent, although I've grown and grown and grown, until now, I must be three miles higher than that second freckle on the end of your nose.





The Birthday Bonnet

The stars were laughing so merrily that some of them tumbled from their usual places, and people said: "Something is happening in the sky to-night."

But the people were wrong. Something was happening, but not in the sky. It was happening in the Five-and-Ten-Cent Store. The stars knew, and that's why they laughed so merrily.

To-morrow was Marcellina's birthday, and Marcellina was a mouse. Georgie Graytail was her very good friend, and Georgie was in the Five-and-Ten looking for a birthday present.

There were so many things to choose from. The night before last he had finally made up his mind, and he'd chosen a fire truck. It was red. Marcellina loved red, and he knew that the siren on the little red truck would just thrill her heart. He could see her now riding through the cellar on it. He could see her speeding past the vinegar jug with its sour old face, past the pickle shelf and the coal heap. He could just see her, and he knew the fire truck was the very thing for her birthday. And because he

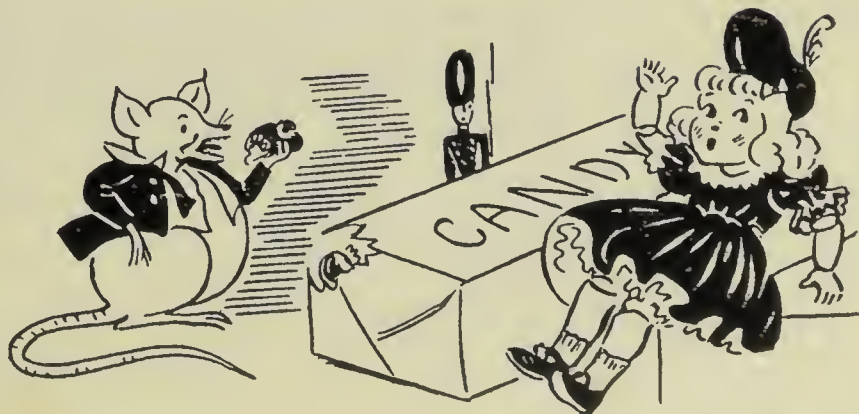
knew this, he'd asked Ronnie Rat to help him gnaw a great hole underneath the counter—a hole big enough to drive the engine right through without so much as scratching a fender.

It was daylight when they had finished, and they had just been about to warm up the engine to drive through, when the shadow of the janitor's big broom loomed over them, and they had to run for their lives. And to-night, when Georgie had come alone to get the truck, he'd found their whole night's work ruined. The place was boarded up, and a big KEEP OUT sign was pinned to the door. Really, these Five-and-Ten people were very tiresome. And now he had to make up his mind all over again, while the stars laughed merrily above.

"Oh," said Georgie, "oh, dear! What shall I do?"

He liked the egg-beaters. It was fun to ride on their spinning wheels, and they shone like the laughing stars. "But," he thought, "she might spin all the time and forget about me. She might even ask her friends over in the evening for egg-beater rides, and I wouldn't like that. No, I guess I won't give Marcellina an egg-beater for her birthday."

By now, he had reached the candy case. "Candy, um-m-m, that's nice, but too much of it is bad for your teeth, and Marcellina needs her teeth to gnaw her way through the world. I know she'd like candy, but . . . well, I don't know what to do about it."



The great boxes were very pretty, but a bit large for Georgie to handle, so he sat down to think more carefully, and as he thought, he nibbled. He chewed on a gum-drop.

"No, not candy. I must learn to be careful of Marcellina's teeth." And he reached for a peppermint stick.

"Besides, it might upset her." And he reached for a cherry chocolate.

"Yes, it might make her sick even." And he reached for a marshmallow.

"Ugh, ugh . . . yes . . . it would make her sick." And he gasped, and he turned a bit dizzy. "I'd best lie down a little." And he crept into a cozy blue-lined doll's crib that stood invitingly next to the book-shelf, and covered himself up with the tiny satin quilts.

Soon he felt much better, and he sat up and looked about him. It was *then* that he saw the very thing for Marcellina — a bonnet! A *bonnet*! There on a counter, two aisles to the left, was a display of dolls' bonnets such as you've never seen in all your life—straw bonnets, silken bonnets and satin, blue bonnets and green, red bonnets and pink, orange, violet—all the rainbow was there, flower bedecked and feather trimmed. A bonnet for Marcellina . . . why hadn't he thought of it before?

He leaped from the doll's bed and landed right on the counter among the hats. He began to look them over. First, he must make up his mind about the colour. Red—it was nice, and he knew Marcel-

lina liked it, but it would be very easy for Carolina Cat to see red, and once Marcellina got a new bonnet she'd be just everywhere, and wherever she was, he would be. And perhaps, some day when she'd be walking in the red bonnet, Carolina would see them and catch him. Oh, that would be terrible! No, not red. Black? Too dull—all right for some people, but not for his beautiful Marcellina. Again the stars laughed. Green? Oh, no! That was just the colour of Carolina's eyes. He hated green.

Here was a soft blue. It was lovely. Little ribbons of lavender hung coyly down the back, and in front, right in front, was the most beautiful bunch of forget-me-nots that Georgie had ever seen. The very thing for Marcellina's birthday gift! The feathered bonnets were lovely; but no, Marcellina would want flowers. He'd look no further. So, picking up the blue bonnet, he turned towards home. He had just reached the special little hole when the night watchman saw him.

"Come back here, you, Georgie Graytail," cried that gentleman.

"Oh, oh!" said Georgie, and he ran with all his might.

"Come back, I say," called the watchman, as he threw a toy trunk.

"Oh, oh!" gasped Georgie, as it caught him right on the nose.

"Drop that bonnet," said the watchman.

"Oh, oh!" said Georgie, as he clung all the more tightly to his lovely gift.



A flying scrubbing brush came with full force against Georgie's front teeth. He felt them loosen. "Oh, oh!" he cried again and ran on. He had reached the hole. But so had the watchman. A great boot came down full on his tail and half on Marcellina's bonnet. With one desperate tug he wrenched away, pulling the bonnet with him. But the forget-me-nots—ah! the forget-me-nots were gone. They were crushed 'neath the heel of the watchman's shoe.

"Oh, oh!" he said again, and he sat down and dully stared ahead of him. The watchman closed the hole.

"Well," said Georgie, pulling out his watch and looking at the figures on its shining face, "it might be worse. It's still early, and there must be forget-me-nots somewhere in the world. I suppose I could get a feather; but no, she'd want forget-me-nots. I'll go and look."

He put the bonnet of blue carefully into the tray of his trunk, and taking a drink of milk to keep up his strength, he set out in search of forget-me-nots.

The first place he found himself was in a pantry. And the first thing he saw was forget-me-nots. They were on a cup—a slim cup—a pretty cup.

"Luck is with me," said Georgie Graytail, and he went to the cup. But could he get those forget-me-nots off? No, sir! That cup held on for dear life. "Perhaps if I got inside," he said. But when he got inside, the forget-me-nots were gone. Well, he was so cross that he jumped up and down inside that cup, and he jumped so furiously that the cup fell to the floor and broke into a thousand pieces. It echoed through the house from attic to cellar.

"Oh, oh!" said Georgie again. "Oh, what a night!"

The cat heard, and the canary; the dog heard, and the man servant. Georgie knew he was in danger, but he must not get caught, for to-morrow was Marcellina's birthday. He hurried from the pantry. He found himself in the garden. Teddy Toad looked at him in surprise.

"What are you doing out here, Georgie?" asked the surprised Teddy. "Don't often see you in the garden."

"No," blushed Georgie. "No. Well . . . well, you see . . . I came out for some forget-me-nots. You see, to-morrow is . . . oh . . ."

"Oh, you needn't get so red in the face, Georgie!" said Teddy. "I know to-morrow is Marcellina's birthday. But why forget-me-nots?"

"I want them for her bonnet. I got a lovely bonnet in the Five-and-Ten, but I lost the flowers. The night watchman . . . you know."

"Oh, yes! I know. He's got his nose into everything."



"It was his foot this time, Teddy," smiled Georgie sadly. "Teddy, where are the forget-me-nots in this garden?"

"Would you believe it, Georgie, I don't know. That sounds stupid, but I've never had any need for forget-me-nots. But we can have a look."

And the two little friends went up and down the garden paths looking for the tiny flowers for Marcellina's bonnet. But they could not find them.

"Now, here's a nice rose, Georgie. Why not put a rose in it? That would be nice."

"No," said Georgie. "It's too heavy for Marcellina to carry, and the perfume is so sweet, it might make her ill."

"How about a feather?"

"No, no, Marcellina likes flowers."

"Well, how about a brown-eyed Susan?"

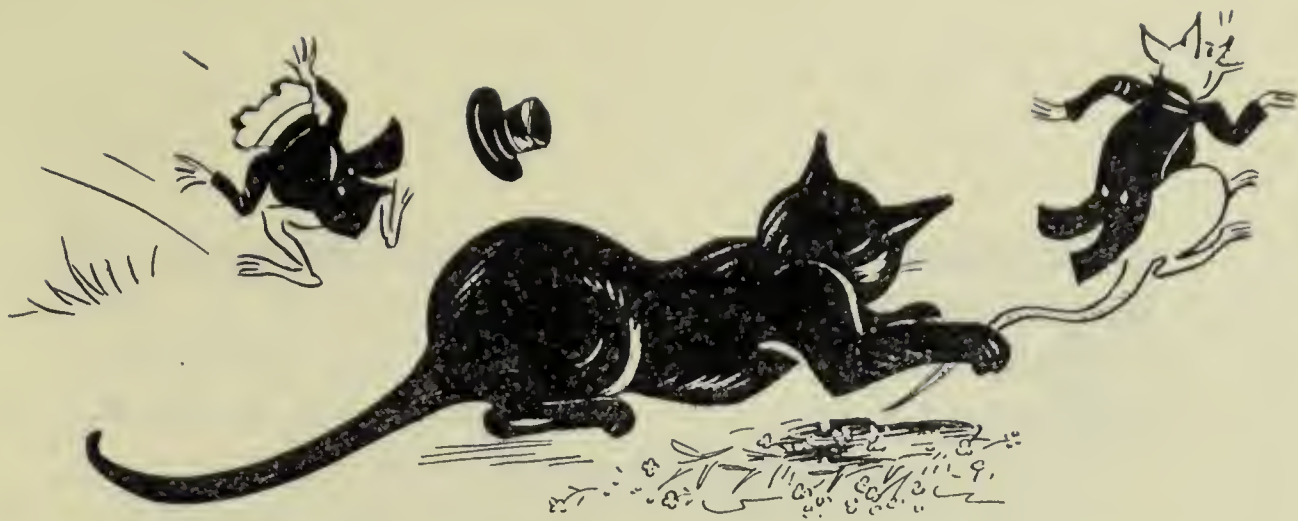
"Not so good with blue, I think; and anyway, I want forget-me-nots."

"Well, here comes the cut-worm. He's sure to know."

And the cut-worm did. He cut Georgie a lovely little nosegay of forget-me-nots and said to give his greetings, too, to Marcellina. Georgie thanked him and said he would.

And just when everything seemed so right and so settled, and just when Georgie was about to go in the cellar window, Carolina Cat awoke from her first sleep.

"Good-evening," she said, and she reached for Georgie Graytail. The flowers fell in a mud-puddle



and were ruined. Georgie was tossed high into the air.

Carolina laughed, but Georgie sobbed.

"Please, Carolina, please let me go, please."

"Why should I let you go, Georgie?" asked Carolina. "I've been trying to catch you for ever so long."

"I know you have . . . I know . . . but oh! do try again some other time, wouldn't you . . . couldn't you? To-morrow is Marcellina's birthday, and I have a new bonnet for her."

"Oh, well . . . well . . ." said Carolina, "in that case, I'll let you go."

Again the stars laughed down from their heavenly home.

"Thank you, Carolina. Oh, thank you!" said Georgie. Then, "Oh, look what you've done!" he said, as he held the mud-soaked blossoms towards Carolina. "And I had these for her little hat."

Carolina felt ashamed and a little sad, and she said: "I'm sorry, Georgie; really I am. But, Georgie, those forget-me-nots were no good for a bonnet anyway. They'd have been dead by morning. I'll tell you what to do. Go upstairs to the

clothes closet, and on Miss Molly's white coat you'll find a beautiful bunch of flowers."

"Forget-me-nots?"

"No. Violets."

"But I want forget-me-nots."

"What colour is your bonnet?" asked Carolina.

"Blue."

"Why violets will be sweet on it," said Carolina.

"I'm a girl, and I know. Good luck, Georgie, and tell Marcellina happy birthday for me, too."

"Yes, Carolina." And with a bleeding tail that Carolina had bitten when she tossed him, and that the night watchman had nipped when he trampled him, he made his way to the clothes press and the violets. There they were sure enough. But they were pinned with the biggest pins in the whole wide world.

First he tried to move them with his teeth, but his teeth were sore and loose. Next he tried lassoing them with his wounded tail, but the blood was staining the flowers. Pushing with his already battered nose, he finally broke the hold of the pins on the soft flannel, but he was pricked from head to toe. He didn't mind. He had the flowers for



Marcellina, hadn't he? Bruised, but happy, he sat down on his trunk to tack them to the little bonnet.

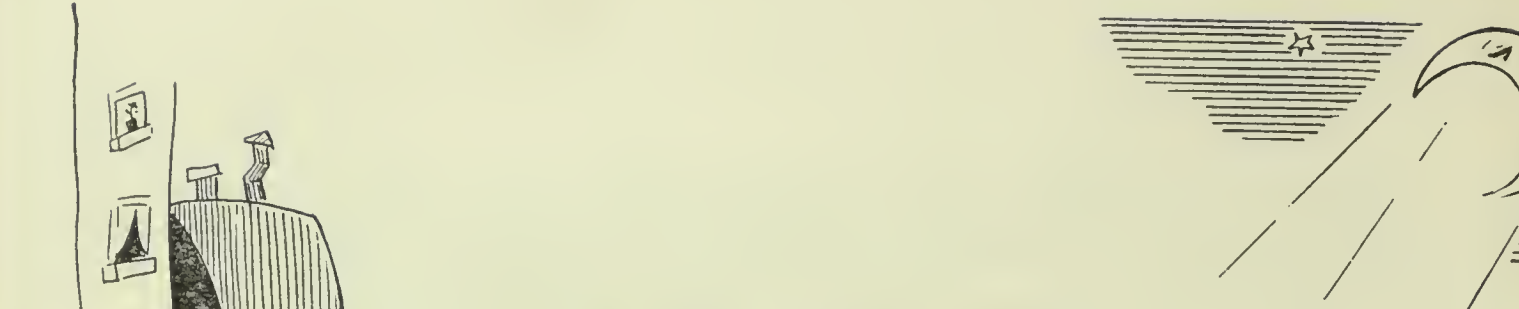
Morning came, and with it Marcellina's birthday. Hiding his pain with the widest smile in mouseland, he gave Marcellina his gift.

"Oh, Georgie!" she said. "How lovely!"

And then her face fell. A tear crept into her pretty eyes, as she looked again.

"Oh! there are flowers on it. I'd much sooner have had feathers."

The stars laughed out loud.



Kitty Crooked Crown

It just happened that the Lady Moon was lonely that night, and she sighed dolefully from a blue-black sky. "Ho, hum," she said, and she looked down towards the earth.

And it so happened that Little, Little Cat was lonely that night too, and he sighed dolefully into a blue-black breast. "Ho, hum," he said, and he looked up towards the sky. And he saw the moon, and the moon saw him.

And the moon said: "What a lonely little cat! No one is near him at all—not a chick nor a child." And she looked again. "He has no home, I do believe. Ah, that is very sad! And here I am safe and sound in the sky with the stars to love me and the sun to warm me. I should be glad that I'm not that little, little cat down there in the alley."

And because the Lady Moon is kind, she smiled down at Little, Little Cat in her kindly way. The pussy-cat saw her smile and looked about him.

"She can't be smiling at me like that," he thought. "Nobody smiles at me like *that*."

For although his coat was fluffy and black, although his ears were fluffy and pink, and although his tail was

fluffy and long, he'd only one eye. And people would turn from him and say: "Ugh, what an ugly little cat! Go away, go away from me."

And the little cat would go; and because he had been chased so many times and by so many people, he could run faster than any little cat in the world. He could climb the tallest tree; he could jump the highest fence. With the little cat, it was always moving day.

Once a small girl had loved him. He'd never forget that. She'd found him in an orange crate, where he'd hidden from an angry brown dog. The little girl had held him close to her soft, cool cheek, and she'd taken him home. She had a garden, too. Just think of that—a garden! Little, Little Cat loved that.

He had hoped to stay with her in her garden, but her mother had said: "Ugh, what an ugly little cat! Put him out. He has only one eye."

And Jane Ann had answered: "But he can't help it, Mummy. He's so little and alone, and he wants me so."

"Well, I don't want him, Jane Ann. Put him out."

And Little, Little Cat had not seen her since that day. And since that day, no one had smiled on him until to-night. So, it's no wonder that the little cat looked about him. The Lady Moon spoke.

"Good-evening, Little Cat," she said.

"Good-evening, Lady Moon," answered the tiny black puss. "You are very bright to-night. Are you so happy away up there with the stars?"

Lady Moon laughed. "Not so very happy, Little Cat. I'm rather lonely to-night. I was looking for a friend, and I just happened to see you."

"You . . . you don't want me for a friend, do you?" gasped Little, Little Cat.

"Of course, I do," said the moon. "If you'll be my friend."

Little, Little Cat's one eye sparkled in the blue light of the evening with a happiness that crept into every crevice of the alley. But he did not speak—he couldn't—he was too filled with joy.

"Don't you want to be my friend?" went on the Lady Moon, still smiling in her silvery way. "Yes, oh yes, yes!" said Little, Little Cat. "But perhaps I'd best tell you, Lady Moon," and the pussy's voice became almost a whisper, "I've only one eye."

The moon's soft laughing rustled the tree-tops. "What difference does that make, Little Cat? Why do you think you need to tell me that?" she asked.

"But I'm not a bit pretty, Lady Moon. I'm very, very ugly."

"You're very, very silly, that's what you are. And if I were down there, I'd take you over my red checkered apron, and I'd give you a good spanking for saying such a thing."

Little, Little Cat laughed merrily. "I like you, Lady Moon," he said.

"And I like you, Little Cat. But I don't like to see you sitting all alone in an alley. What you need is a home."



Kitty nodded her head.

"A good home," went on Lady Moon, "with a basket to sleep in and a child to love."

"A child did love me once. Her name was Jane Ann. Yes, I do need a home, but I'll never find one, just because I've got only . . ."

"Sh-h, don't say it, and I'll find a home for you, just see if I don't," said the moon.

And she sent her silver beams out over all the world to search in crannies to find a basket and a child for the Little, Little Cat.

One ray fell on a tumble-down house. It was old and shabby, but it had white curtains at the windows and a geranium on the sill. So Lady Moon just knew it must be a nice home for Little, Little Cat. She lit the room with her silvery light, and it fell on a face as silvery as her own—a little old, old lady lay sleeping.

"I've found a home for you, Little Cat," called the Lady of the Sky, "a sweet and peaceful home. Go to the shabby house at the end of the lane, with the geranium in the window."

The little cat did. He meowed his very best, "Let me in, let me in."

"Bow, wow," snapped an Airedale from under the step. "Go away from here. This is my house and my old lady and my geranium. Go away, I say."

Little, Little Cat was afraid of dogs. He looked up.

"Yes, you'd better go away," said the moon.

"I'll try again. It's too, too bad, for she was a nice old lady."

Another ray fell over a roof-top and slipped cautiously through an attic window. A small boy tossed restlessly 'neath heavy blankets. A smile crept over his flushed face as the moon fell on it, and he sighed.

"Perhaps he's dreaming of kittens," thought the moon, "little black kittens. Here is a good home for the little cat."

And the Lady Moon went once more into the alley to the waiting pussy.

"Climb on yon roof," she said. "There's a nice wee boy in bed. He's very warm, and he's dreaming of kittens."

"Thank you," said the little cat. And he walked along a fence-top. He leaped to a tree. He crawled out on a swinging branch and jumped to the roof. He made his way to the window. It was screened. Little, Little Cat turned sadly to the moon.

"Call to him, Little Cat. Wake him," she said. "He'll let you in."

"Meow, meow," said Little, Little Cat. But the little boy dreamed on.

"Try again, louder."

"Meow, meow," said the kitten.

"More *cats*," said an angry voice from somewhere. "I declare, I can't get a wink any night for cats on that roof."

"Meow, meow," still called the little cat to the sleeping boy.

From a house across the alley came a flying old shoe.

"Get away, get away from here," the angry voice continued.

"Meow," said Little, Little Cat, and he turned to escape a flying shoe.

"Oh," said the one who threw it, "oh, you ugly, one-eyed creature! Get away from here. Get away."

And Little, Little Cat went away, for he fell down, down, down, into the alley, where he lay frightened and bruised in a sawdust heap. He tried to smile through his tears, but instead he cried bitterly: "Meow, meow, meow."

Lady Moon brushed a tear from her own eye as she looked down at his misery. She tossed her silver head. "Don't cry, Little Cat. Don't you cry. There must be some way."

"It . . . it's because I'm so ugly," he said. "I'm just a one-eyed little cat. Oh! why wasn't I born a king instead?"

"A *king* . . . a crown . . . a *crown* . . . That's it, Little Cat," sang the moon. "A crown."

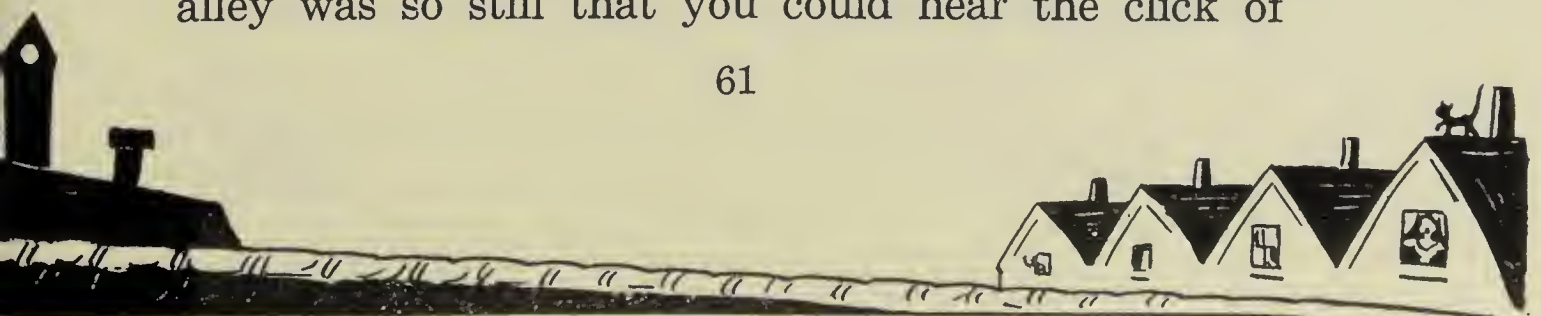
"What?"

"A crown . . . you need a crooked crown."

"To cover my ugly eye, yes," said pussy.

"We'll make you one," said the moon. And she looked into the alley. Sticks and stones and broken glass—those would never do. And she looked about her . . . stars . . . *stars* . . . a crown of stars!

Little, Little Cat hardly dared to breathe. The alley was so still that you could hear the click of





Sadie Spider's high-heeled shoes as she made her way home from a quilting party. Little, Little Cat's one eye was full of wonder as Lady Moon made her plans.

"You've got to get up here to me, Little Cat," she said. "It's the only way."

"Yes."

"Climb to the top of that elm tree."

"Yes."

"Out to the topmost branch."

"Yes."

"Come on, you lazy dipper," laughed the excited moon. "Scoop that kitten off the tree, and toss him over here to me."

"Yas, 'um," yawned the lazy dipper. "But couldn't he wait till morning?"

"No, he couldn't. You do it, now—right now."

"Yes, 'um."

The kitten reached, the dipper scooped, the little cat dropped plump into the Lady Moon's silver lap. The Lady Moon looked at this lonesome, unhappy bundle of fluff, and she said: "Ugly, indeed! Why, you're a lovely little cat. Your fur is soft, your tail is long, and there's enough love in that one eye to last a child for a lifetime."

Little, Little Cat purred happily.

"And now for your crown!"

Picking a handful of stars from the twinkling sky, Little, Little Cat's silver friend twined them together with a thread from the rosy dawn. She fastened them with a bit of the rainbow, and set

them, shining and beautiful, on the little cat's head.

Lady Moon smiled again.

"I'll call you 'Kitty Crooked Crown'," she said, "and I'll send you home on a moonbeam."

And Little, Little Cat—now Kitty Crooked Crown—with his halo of stars tipped saucily over one eye, slid down to earth again and into a garden. It was nearly morning. The soft gray light of the early day was creeping over the violet hills.

The weary pussy-cat fell asleep and dreamed, not of flying shoes and alleys, but happy dreams of days to come.

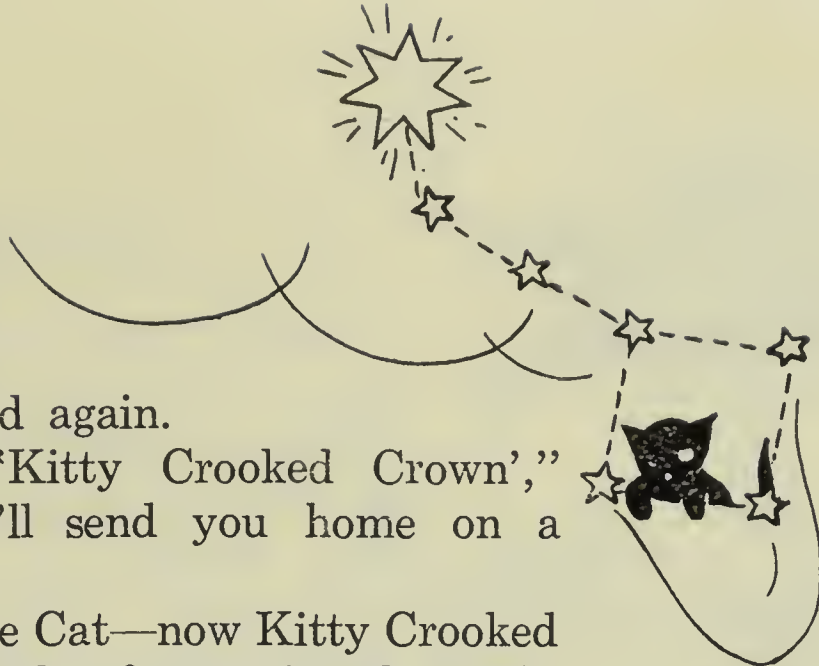
'Twas a little girl who found him in the garden. 'Twas a little girl, and—would you believe it?—the little girl was Jane Ann, as true as true.

"Mummy, Mummy, come quickly. See what I've found—a little kitten with a crown of stars."

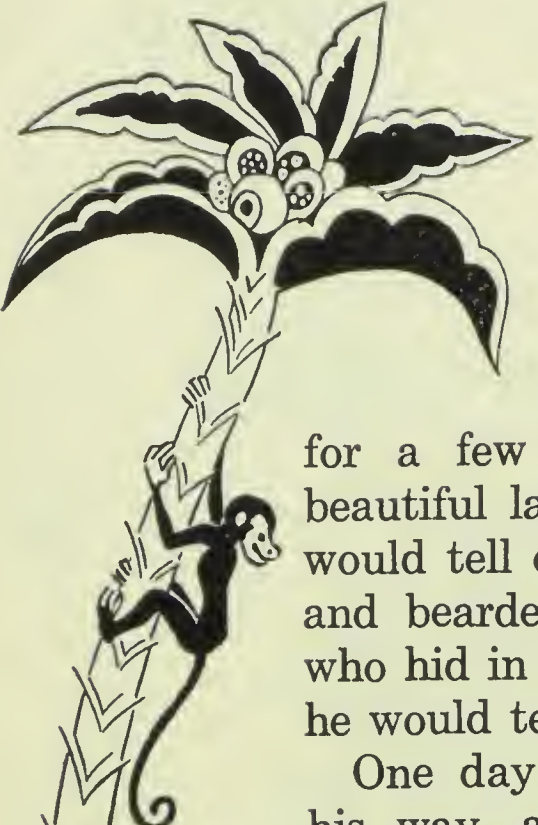
And children came to see and to love little Kitty Crooked Crown.

From his place in the sun, Little, Little Cat meowed his thanks to Lady Moon, and the lady smiled down at the little cat.

I'm glad it just happened that the moon was lonely that night, aren't you? I'm glad she sighed into the blue-black sky. I'm glad she peered into the dark, black alley. I'm just plain glad . . . glad for Kitty Crooked Crown.



A Silly Tale



In the so long, long ago, there lived in an old town of many walls and houses a story-teller. He sat near the city gates, spinning his yarns for a few coins. Sometimes he would tell of beautiful ladies in gowns of gold; sometimes he would tell of beggars like himself, heavily cloaked and bearded; sometimes he would tell of fairies who hid in the rocks and crannies; and sometimes he would tell silly tales about nothing at all.

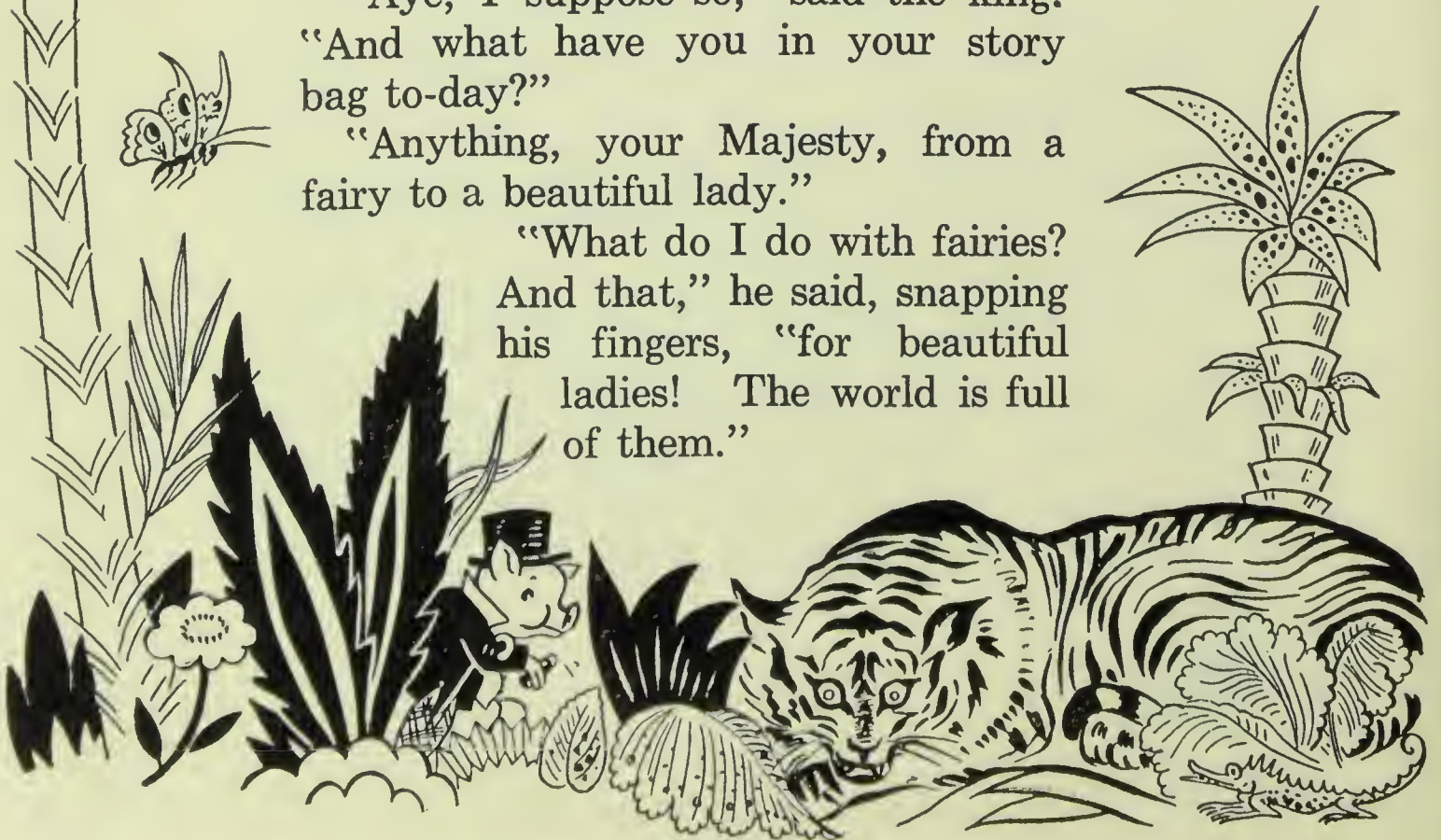
One day a great and ill-tempered king came his way, and drew rein at the city gates. He looked at the story-teller, and he said: "What do you there?"

And the story-teller replied: "I tell stories, your Majesty, for a few coins, of course," he added cunningly.

"Aye, I suppose so," said the king. "And what have you in your story bag to-day?"

"Anything, your Majesty, from a fairy to a beautiful lady."

"What do I do with fairies? And that," he said, snapping his fingers, "for beautiful ladies! The world is full of them."



"Perhaps, then, the tale of a beggar?"

The king answered: "No."

"Then maybe, your Majesty, just a silly tale about nothing at all."

"Aye, that will do." And digging down into his money bag, he threw the story-teller a handful of coins. They shone on the pavement like a dozen suns fallen from the sky. The beggar gathered them 'neath his cloak, and turning his sharp eyes towards the king, he began: "There was once a pig, who owned a pepper-pot . . ."

"A pig!" roared the king. "What is silly about a pig?"

"It's silly to be one; to that you must agree," said the beggar.

"Yes, it's silly to be a pig. Well, go on, go on, go on."

"But, your Majesty," said the beggar, "I cannot tell a story if you keep bellowing at me like that. You must keep still."

"What? You, a beggar, tell me, a king, to keep quiet? Why . . . why, that's . . . that's silly."



The beggar laughed up his sleeve. "But this is a silly tale. There was once a pig, such a silly little pig, who squealed in the silliest way from morn till night—just oink, oink, oink. His tail had two curls to the right and two curls to the left, and the end was curled all over. His snout was round and sharp; his ears were pink and straight; his body was fine and fat. He was really a beautiful pig except for his oink, oink, oink."

"Go on, go on," roared the king, throwing the beggar another coin.

"One day the little pig who oinked from morn till night just guessed he'd run away. He was tired of the pig-sty. It was wet and dirty, and the pigs there were . . . well, they were just pigs. They ate and ate and ate, and sloshed about in the muck.

" 'I'm going away from here,' said the squealing little pig.

" 'Who cares?' said the hen.

" 'I don't, I'm sure,' said the duck. 'I'm sick and I'm tired of your oink, oink, oink.'

" 'Well,' said the hen, 'I can't say that it's much worse, Mrs. Duck, than your quack, quack, quack.'

" 'I suppose you think your cut, cut, cut, cut, cut is music,' said Mrs. Duck.

" 'Now, now,' said the duck. 'Let's not quarrel. Where are you going, little pig?' "

The beggar stopped to scratch his chin, and the king roared: "Go on, go on. Where was he going?"

“To the jungles of the east. ‘I’m too fine a fellow,’ said the little pig, ‘to spend my life among pigs.’

“ ‘But you’re a pig yourself,’ said the hen. ‘That’s where you belong.’

“ ‘How do you know I’m a pig? I just look like a pig, that’s all. I may be a tiger for all you know.’

“ ‘That’s silly,’ said the duck. ‘A tiger has stripes.’

“ ‘Is that so?’ said the little pig. He’d never seen a tiger.

“ ‘Yes, that’s so,’ said the cat.

“ ‘Well, maybe I had stripes once. Maybe I was born out in the rain.’

“ ‘Yes, maybe,’ said the cat, ‘maybe. Well, let me tell you something, little *pig*, you’re not a tiger. For the tiger is my cousin, and he doesn’t look like you. He’s a handsome fellow, and he goes gr-r-r-r-r-r, gr-r-r-r-r-r.’

“ ‘Oh, my crooked tail . . . like that?’

“ ‘Yes, your crooked tail, like that . . . only worse.’

“ ‘Oh!’

“ ‘Everybody is afraid of him.’

“And that was true, for Tommy Tiger was fierce and bold. He lived in Bengal, and Bengal was in India, and India is on the other side of the world. He always had his nap just at dinner-time. And at dinner-time it was so still in the jungle that you could hear the water lilies sighing. No one dared so much as flick an eyebrow for fear of waking the sleeping Tommy.



"But on this day that the little pig left home, it so happened that a monkey, thirsty in the noon-day sun, had reached from his place of hanging on a bamboo tree, for a cocoanut . . .

and cocoanut! . . . one fell and hit Tommy Tiger full on the striped nose. Of course he woke. Why wouldn't he? You'd wake too if a cocoanut fell on your nose.

"Well, Tommy roared with all his might: GR-R-R, GR-R-R. The whole jungle shook in fright. Every leaf on every tree trembled. Every spider who had ever spun a web ran for home. Every bird in the blue-green sky hid its head under its wing. All was still. No sound could be heard until Tommy Tiger was sleeping again, and then it was just a whisper. 'Oh!' chattered the monkey. 'Oh, what a silly boy I am! What a silly boy I am! I'll never hunt for cocoanuts at high noon again.'

"A red bird twittered: 'How terrible he is! Every feather in my tail was a-twitter.' And because he was so terrible the only noise that could be heard was a stillness."

The beggar stopped again, and did not go on until he heard the clanking of another coin on the pavement.

"Now, how the oinking little pig ever got to the jungle, I don't know. Maybe he flew, but that's silly. Maybe he skied, but that is silly too, because there is no snow in the jungle . . . just alligators and

swamps and birds and flowers and elephants and monkeys and Tommy Tiger, but no snow.

"Oh well! what difference how he got there? For he got there, because he was there. He walked along with his high hat (he had a high hat, but I forgot to tell you before), his pepper pot (I didn't forget to tell you that), and his umbrella. His umbrella was pink . . . no, it was blue . . . maybe it was green, I don't know, but who cares? He had it with him. Yes, he had his high hat, his umbrella, and his pepper pot, for one never knows when one will need a pepper pot.

" 'It's very quiet here,' he said, and he oinked, oinked, oinked.

" 'Sh,' said the monkey, swinging from a branch.

" 'Sh,' said the elephant, hiding behind a buttercup.

" 'Sh,' said the jungle fowl, as she laid a golden egg.

" 'Sh,' said everyone in the jungle, except Tommy Tiger, and he was sleeping."

"And did the pig hush?" broke in the king.

"No," said the beggar, "he just said: 'I guess I can say oink, oink, oink, whenever I like,' and he walked off singing:

'Tra-la-la-la-la-la, I'm an oinking little pig.

Tra-la-la-la-la, my name is Piggy Wig.'

"Now just ahead of him in the jungle sunlight lay Tommy Tiger. You remember the little pig had never seen a tiger, and so when he saw this great

striped thing in his path, he stopped and looked at it.

“‘Ah-ha,’ he said, ‘I have found something.’ And he felt Tommy. ‘It’s soft, and it’s striped. I think it must be a garden seat. Yes, that’s what it is. I will sit down on it and oink, oink a little.’

“And he did. He sat down on the garden seat that was really Tommy Tiger, and he oinked to his heart’s content. But as you would expect, he soon woke Tommy.

“‘G-r-r-r-r-r,’ said that fellow, and he jumped to his feet.

“The little pig fell backwards. His umbrella caught in a jungle bush, but he held tightly to his high hat and pepper pot.

“‘GR-R-R-R-R,’ said Tommy again.

“The little pig laughed, and his tail twinkled, and his snout winkled, and he said: ‘My, oh my! oh my! what a big noise you *do* make! Who are you anyway?’

“Tommy showed his glistening white teeth in a wicked smile. ‘Who am I? I am Tommy Tiger. Who are you?’

“‘Me? Oh, tra-la-la-la-la, I am an oinking pig. Tra-la-la-la-la, my name is Piggy Wig.’

“‘I’m king of the Bengal,’ roared Tommy Tiger.

“‘I’m king of the oinks,’ laughed Piggy Wig. ‘You know, I’m glad to meet you. I’ve always wanted to see a tiger.’

“‘Well, that’s fine. Take a good look. You may never have another chance.’



" 'Thank you,' said Piggy Wig. 'I may never want another chance.' And he walked all around the great beast—right, left, back, front,—and then he said, 'Well, good-day to you. I'll be going now that I've seen all sides of you.'

" 'Not all sides,' roared Tommy Tiger. 'You haven't seen the *insides*,' and with that he leaped at the little pig and gobbled him up, high hat, pepper pot, and all.

"Now the little pig didn't want to see the insides of Tommy Tiger, but Tommy hadn't given him a chance to say so. On the way down, the little pig just guessed he'd go back. So he turned, but he got caught crossways in the tiger's throat, and he couldn't move another inch.

"The jungle folk were all excited, so excited they

just couldn't keep still; the poor little stranger with the oink, oink, oink had been caught by Tommy Tiger. How sad! How very sad! And they all sighed, and they all dropped a tear, and each sigh sobbed, and each tear splashed; and Tommy Tiger heard, and was angry. He turned to roar at them, 'Gr-r-r-r-r,' but all he could say was 'Oink, oink, oink.' His face grew pink, and then it grew red, and he tried again—'Oink, oink, oink.'

"Laughter filled the whole world. From every corner of the seven seas, you could hear the echoes of the laughing jungle. Tommy Tiger had *oinked*. He slunk away into the deepest depths of the bamboo thickets. He hung his head in shame. Never again would he be King of the Jungle. No *king* had ever oinked.

"But the little pig was not a king, so he had no crown to worry him, except of course the crown of his hat. He straightened that, and began to think.

" 'This is no place for a pig to be, crossways in a cross tiger. I must get out of here and go home. After all, there's no place like home.' And it was then he thought of his pepper pot. It's a wonder he hadn't thought of it before. You did, didn't you? I did, didn't I? Well, he got it out, and he lifted the lid.

" 'Kerchoo-oo-oo-oo-oo,' said the tiger.

" 'Good-bye,' said the little pig, and he hung tightly on to that sneeze until he landed right back in his own pig-sty.

“ ‘Humph,’ said the hen. ‘So you’ve come back.’

“ ‘Yes,’ said the pig, ‘and if I didn’t forget my umbrella!’

“That’s all,” said the story-teller.

“*All!*” said the king. “That’s all? I’ve a good mind to throw you into prison for telling such a yarn. Why, that’s the silliest story I’ve ever heard.”

“And you’re the silliest king I’ve ever met to sit there and listen to it.”

The king spurred his horse and rode away. And that’s the tale of the story-teller, who lived in an old, old town of many walls and houses, in the shadow of the gateway, in the so long, long ago.



Barnyard Capers



Perhaps you'll smile into your blue checkered handkerchief when I tell you this, but I don't care, because it's true. Columbine Cow *did* lead the circus parade the last time the circus was in town; and Columbine Cow is going to lead the circus parade the next time the circus is in town. How do I know? Because Columbine Cow is *in* the circus.

Oh, I know she's just an ordinary cow . . . but smart . . . um-m-m-m . . . Besides giving most a million pails of milk a day, she plays her cowbells more beautifully than any other cow in the pasture. Ding, ding, ding . . . just like that! Now isn't that lovely? But so was Columbine. Her sides were as soft as your velveteen bunny, her toes were as shiny as your Micky Mouse watch, her horns were as tall as yon church steeple, and her voice was like a song. "Moo-oo-oo-oo," she would sing . . . just like that!

And everyone would turn and look at her, that is nearly everyone, and nearly everyone would say: "Oh, there goes Columbine Cow! She's the most beautiful cow in all the world."

And Columbine, who rang her bell so dingly, and who mooed her moo so mooingly, would roll her sad brown eyes and say to her lovely self: "What's the use of being beautiful when I just stand in a cow-shed most of the day?" And Ricky Rooster

from his perch high in the rafters of the barn would shake his head too and say: "I'd do something about it, Columbine, if I were you."

"What would you do, Ricky?" asked Columbine.

"I'd fly away," said Ricky.

Columbine Cow laughed merrily at the idea of flying away. "Maybe you would, Ricky. Maybe *you* would, but what about *me*? Did you ever see a flying cow?"

The old cat, who was sent to the barn to catch the mice but who didn't catch them because she was their friend, laughed merrily too. "If Columbine Cow had wings, Ricky, she wouldn't need to worry about staying in the cow-shed. She could join the circus. Couldn't you, Columbine?"

The circus? Columbine had not thought of that before . . . the circus . . . *the circus*, and her velveteen sides shivered in delight. "Oh!" she sang, and then her voice dropped, "but I'll never get to the circus. I'm only a cow, and I should be an elephant."

Ricky Rooster crowed disgustedly. "You should be an elephant," he said with scorn. "Look, I



wouldn't be an elephant for all the corn in the corn-field. I think it must be no end of trouble looking after two tails."

Again Columbine and the old cat laughed. "The elephant hasn't got two tails. That's a trunk, Ricky," said Columbine.

"Where's a trunk?" said Ricky, looking about him.

"I mean the elephant's front tail; it's a trunk."

"Then it's silly. A trunk indeed! A trunk is to put things in."

"Well, he puts things in his trunk," said the cat. "He puts peanuts and peanuts and peanuts."

"Yes, and who'd want to eat peanuts all day long and never a bit of corn-meal? Not I, for one. And for another thing, I don't like his front teeth, and his feet are too big; and, Columbine, don't you be silly wishing you were a peanut-eater."

Columbine sighed again. "And," added Ricky comfortingly, "if I weren't a rooster, I'd be a cow."

"And if I weren't a cat, I'd be a cow," said Pussy, who didn't catch mice.

"But if I *were* a cow," went on Ricky, "I wouldn't have horns; I'd have feathers instead. Columbine, why don't you get some feathers in your tail?"

The old gray barn rocked with laughter. Her sides creaked noisily in the still summer heat, and the farmer who was weeding among the turnips scratched his head questioningly and wondered if he were dreaming.

The old black horse, who up to now had been listening, spoke: "If I were as young and lovely as



Columbine,” she said, “if I could sing as beautifully as she can sing, I’d not stay here wishing I were an elephant. I’d go and join the circus.”

“Well, I wish you’d all do something,” said a sleepy bat, “if you’re going some place, go, why don’t you? Get out of here, and do something. All you do is talk, talk, talk, talk, and keep other people awake. And after all, I don’t know what all the fuss is about anyway. Columbine is just a cow, and a cow’s a cow whether she’s a columbine or a daffodil.”

Now Columbine was very hurt at being called a cow. Oh! so you’re smiling into that blue checkered handkerchief again, aren’t you? Well, I don’t care. If I’d been Columbine, I’d have been hurt too, because I wouldn’t want anyone to call me a cow, and neither would you. And Ricky was hurt because, if he weren’t a rooster, he’d be a cow; and Old Cat was hurt because, if she weren’t a cat, she’d be a cow. So with broken hearts all three of them went out of the barn and into the barnyard to get the sun and to think of poor Columbine, who wanted to join the circus.

And whom do you suppose they met but that saucy little Scotty dog who lived at the farmhouse and dined three times a day on chicken bones and cream? Now, although he was a saucy little dog, he was very lovable. Columbine loved him, Ricky loved him, Old Cat loved him, Black Horse loved him, I loved him, and you’d love him too if you knew him. Oh, yes, you would! You wouldn’t be able

to help it. He had just a little way of playing on your heart strings that was all his own. He looked at the cow, he looked at the cat, he looked at the hen, I mean rooster, and he said just what you would have said: "Why, what's the matter?"

No one answered.

"Is anyone dead?" asked Scotty, the pup.

"No," they answered in one voice.

"Is anyone sick?"

"No."

"Then what is it? What's the matter?"

"It's just . . . just . . . just . . . well, Bertie Bat called Columbine a cow, mind you."

"And Columbine wants to join the circus."

"And she has no trunk."

"What in the world does she want a trunk for? She has no clothes to put in a trunk," said Scotty.

Again Columbine couldn't help breaking into a merry laugh. And she laughed until she couldn't laugh any more, because she thought of how sad she was because she was not an elephant, and she said: "It's an elephant's trunk, I need, Scotty . . . an elephant's trunk, because I couldn't join the circus, if there were a circus, because I'm a cow, and a cow's a cow whether she's a columbine or a daffodil."

Scotty's eyes widened. "*If there were a circus!*"

Columbine Cow, do you mean to tell me that you don't know there's a circus coming to town tomorrow?"



To-morrow . . . a circus in town . . . oh . . .

"What's the matter with your eyes?" said Scotty. "Look there." And Scotty pointed to the road side of the barn. Columbine looked, and there in letters as big as another barn she read:

CIRCUS IN TOWN TO-MORROW

Oh! so you've got that blue checkered handkerchief out again, have you? Well, she *did* read it, or else how would she have known? When Scotty saw the eager look in her big cow eyes, he made up his mind.

"Columbine," he said, "you're going to the circus. Yes, you're going to the circus. And what's more, you're going to lead the parade."

You didn't believe me when I told you, did you?

"Yes," said Scotty, "you're going to lead the parade. You're going to get all dressed up, and you're going to town."

"Yes," said Columbine, "but how shall I get out?"

"Black Horse will kick down the fence."

"Yes," said Columbine.

"You'll go to the square; and when the band starts to play, you start off in the lead."

"Yes," said Columbine, "yes . . . but . . ." And her black eyes filled with tears. "Scotty, you said I'd dress up; and, Scotty, I haven't anything to dress up in."

"Poof!" said Scotty, twinkling his tail. "Poof! Don't you worry about that. I'll get you all the clothes any cow could wear."

"Where'll you get them, smarty?" asked Ricky.

"I'll get them in the attic, smarty yourself," laughed Scotty. "There's lots of things up there, and you're going to help me get them, Ricky. You fly to the roof-top there, and don't you crow. Now remember—no cock-a-doodling, for if you cock-a-doodle-doo the tiniest cock-a-coo, everything will be ruined."

"It'll be very hard for Ricky to keep still," said Old Cat.

"Well, anyway, I don't keep people awake nights with my yowling."

"No," said Columbine sweetly. "But this will never get me to the circus, will it?"

It was then that the saucy puppy boldly clawed open the screen door, boldly scampered through the house, and boldly tore up the stairs straight to the attic with its many, many trunks.

It was quite some job for a little puppy dog to open the rusty lid of one of these old boxes, but he did. And oh, such a find! Such a find! A straw hat and another straw hat. Well, Columbine would need two hats, for although she'd only one head, she'd two horns. So he dragged the hats to the window. Ricky flew with them to earth.

The little dog went back to the trunk. Silk stockings, red and green. Well, Columbine would need two pairs, for she'd four legs, hadn't she? Ricky flew with them to earth.

"Come back, Ricky," said Scotty. "We've only just started."

But Ricky did not answer, for Ricky knew if he answered he'd cock-a-doodle, and that would never do. But he came back, this time to get a gay striped skirt with many frills and many bow-knots. He flew to earth. His next bundle was a pair of white trousers.

"She'll need a ribbon for her tail now, Ricky," said Scotty. "I'll leave it on the window-sill, and I'll meet you in the yard."

Ricky nodded his red crowned head. Scotty tore down the stairs, scampered through the house, and once again the door slammed behind the naughty Scotty.

Well, what a time they had next morning dressing Columbine! They had to wait until she was milked, and then they had to wait until the farmer and his wife were safely on the way to the circus. And then the fun began. They didn't know which hat to put on which horn; they didn't know which stocking to put on which foot; they didn't know whether to put the trouser on the front or on behind; and they might never had made up their minds had not the bold cat told them: "Ladies first." So the gay striped skirt with its frill and bow-knots went over Columbine's front legs. They finished off tying a pink ribbon on her tail. Columbine Cow was ready for the circus.

Old Cat meowed a friendly: "Good luck to you!" Black Horse kicked down the gate, and down the road went Columbine in all her glory and stopped only when she reached the square. Her big moment



had come, and she . . . well, what do you suppose she said? . . . "I can't do it . . . I can't . . . I can't." And then the band began to play, and she knew that this was her chance; so she stepped out in the lead, beautiful Columbine Cow.

No one saw the stamping elephants; no one saw the dancing steeds; no one heard the barking seals, or the roaring lions, or the chattering monkeys. The clowns might just as well have stayed at home. Everyone was looking at Columbine Cow. Her bell went "ding, ding" . . . just like that! Her voice sang "moo-oo-oo" . . . just like that! Her velveteen sides and pink-ribboned tail swayed back and forth proudly in time with the band. She held her straw-hatted horns high, as the crowd cheered. And then she went home.

But she didn't stay home. Oh, my, no! The circus man saw her; the circus man wanted her; the circus man got her, pink ribbon and all.

And that's how Columbine Cow came to lead the circus parade the last time the circus was in town,



and that's why Columbine Cow is going to lead the circus parade the next time the circus is in town, because Columbine Cow is *in* the circus. So you can just put that blue checkered handkerchief back in your pocket, for it's true. I believe it, anyway.



The Cowboy and the Pony



*I'm singing a funny song, I am,
Of a little boy and a little lamb,
Of how each of these little ones wanted to be
Something he wasn't . . . so now you'll see,
By turning their wishes into play,
They were happy . . . yes, happy . . . the livelong day.*

The little lamb was beautiful. He was just as white as snow and just as soft as down. His little nose, with its shining black tip, was just the kind of nose you'd love on a little white lamb. His tail was short and frisky. His legs were long and gambolling. Truly, he was a beautiful lamb; and he was happy too, except for one thing—he wanted to be a pony.

The little boy was . . . well, I can't say the little boy was *beautiful*, for no little boy wants to be beautiful. But this little boy was just the nicest little boy that ever stepped off a back porch of a morning. His eyes were bright and blue, his nose was short and freckled, his teeth were white and wiggly. Truly, he was the best kind of six-year-old boy you could find in a world of boys; and he was happy too, except for one thing—he wanted to be a cowboy.

All day long (that is, all the time he was not whistling and having fun) the little boy was saying: "I want to be a cowboy.



I wish I were a cowboy. Heckadoodle! Why can't I be a cowboy?"

And once his mother heard him, and she said: "Why, David, I didn't know that . . . I never dreamed . . . but why . . . ?"

And David told her: "Because I do!"

"I see," said Mother. "Well, you'd be away a great deal of your time, rounding up cattle. I'd not like that."

That was something David had not thought of either, and he knew he'd not like it, for his mother really was the grandest mother. In fact, down in his cowboy heart, he knew his mother was the grandest mother ever born. So he said: "Well, Mum, maybe if Daddy'll just get me some cows, I could round 'em up out there on the lawn just as well as out west, maybe."

Mother laughed softly, and then it was that she told David something Daddy had told her that very morning. "We're going to the country, David—to the country for three whole weeks; and—who knows?—maybe when we get there we'll find some cows for you to round up. You never can tell."

At first David just couldn't speak. He'd never been so *nearly* a cowboy before. When he did find his voice, it was to say: "Well, Mum, I just ought to tell you that there are two things a man like me must have before he can really be a cowboy."

"And those two things?" smiled Mother.

"A cowboy suit and . . . another name."

"Another name?" said Mother.

"Yes! 'cause now, Mum, did you ever hear of a cowboy named David James Stewart MacDougald?"

Mother pursed her lips and rolled her eyes skyward and gave the idea a great deal of serious thought. Then she answered: "Well, no, David, I don't believe I ever have."

"Course you haven't. Now what do you call cowboys, Mum? I mean if you had a real honest-to-goodness, rounder-up cowboy right here in your house, what would you call him?"

"Buck," said Mother.

David's smile was beautiful to see. "Yes, that's it. Heckadoodle, Mum, you know everything! That's it. Buck! And that's my name if I get the cowboy suit. Do I?"

"You'd better run now and play, *Buck*," said Mother.

"Oh, oh, oh!" said David. "Oh!"

And that's just what the little lamb was saying miles away in a meadow near a daisy field: "Oh, oh, oh, I wish I were a pony! Why wasn't I born into a pony? I don't like to be a lamb. I want to gallop and gallop away."

Mother Sheep smiled in her usual lazy way. She was resting on a nearby hillock.

"What would I do without you, Curly? I'd miss you if you were a pony instead of my little lamb. Wouldn't you miss Mother a bit too?"

Curly hadn't thought of that before. Why his mother was the most beautiful mother in all the world, and he'd change her for nobody's mother;

but he said: "If I were a pony, then you'd be a pony, and we'd both be ponies. Wouldn't you like that?"

"Oh, I don't know!" said Mother. "To tell you the truth, Curly, I like being a sheep. Why do you want so much to be a pony?"

Like David, he answered: "Just because I do. Just because I wish I were a pony. I wish I were a pony." And he kept saying that until one day a little boy came into the daisy field, a little boy with a wide-brimmed white hat, with a plaid shirt and flapping chaps, with a lariat and silver spurs; and the little boy was *Buck*.

He saw the little lamb, and he said: "Hello, little lamb, hello."

"Hello, little boy," said Curly.

"It's a nice day," said Buck.

"It's a very nice day," said Curly. "Where are you going, and what is your name, little boy?"

"My name is Buck, and I'm a cowboy. I'm going over the stream to a round-up."

"A cowboy!" Curly's heart pounded with excitement under his woolly white coat. "A cowboy! And I thought he was just a boy. A cowboy! Why he needs a pony."



"Where's your pony, Buck?" he asked. He spoke more loudly than he'd ever spoken before. But I think that's just because he was excited, don't you?

Buck swallowed, then he gulped, and then he said: "My . . . er . . . pony . . ." He had known all along that someone some day was going to ask that question, and now it had come. But this seemed to be a nice little lamb. He wouldn't tell on a fellow.

"Little lamb," David said, "I have no pony. I . . . a . . . round 'em up on my feet."

"Oh!" said Curly. "Pretty stiff job for one cowboy, isn't it?" And he looked hopefully at Buck.

"Yes, yes, it is; but I don't mind. You see, I never just happened to find a pony that suited me."

Curly threw his head up and tossed it wildly, as a pony tosses his mane. Then he looked straight at Buck. "How about trying me, cowboy? I'm a pony."

Buck's eyes widened, just as Mother's had when he changed his name. "Well, heckadoodle, so you are!" he laughed. "And if I didn't think you were a lamb!"

"That is funny, isn't it?" said Curly. "And when I saw you first, do you know what I thought?"

"No, what did you think?"

"I thought you were a little boy."

"Well, heckadoodle!" said Buck, and he threw his arms about the pony's soft woolly neck, and he laughed, and Curly laughed, and they both laughed and laughed and laughed, until the sun caught their merriment and laughed too, and the brook laughed,



and the meadow, and all the daisies swung to and fro in glee. And soon the whole world was laughing because the little lamb had thought that Buck was a little boy and because the little boy had thought the pony was a little lamb.

"What's your name, pony?" said Buck as he mounted the little white steed.

"My name's . . . er . . . a . . . Silver." The mother sheep again smiled lazily from her place in the sun. If it hadn't been so warm, she would likely have laughed out loud.

"Get along, Silver," sang Buck. "Get along, little pony, get along, get along." And over the stream and over the hill went the cowboy and the pony.

All afternoon they rounded up and rounded up and rounded up. Mrs. Bossy Cow was stubborn; she just chewed her cud and refused to be rounded up. Buck and Silver circled her a hundred times and threw their rope a hundred more, but she just stood still and stared at them.

"Maybe she's come from another ranch, Buck," said Silver. "Maybe she's not our cow."

"Maybe you're right," said Buck. "Rustlers! I'll bet that's what. Let's look at the old fence line." And they went over the old fence line, east, west, north, south, and they couldn't find so much as one hole that a cow could slip through.

"She must be our cow, Silver," said Buck. "Let's look her over again." And they did, and when they found that she'd two horns just like all the rest of their cattle, they just knew she belonged to them.

Well, they were just about to call it a day and make camp so that they could eat the cookies that Buck had with him, when the most exciting thing happened. They heard a bark. It echoed, and they heard it again.

"Wolves," said Buck, drawing the pony's reins a bit tighter.

And over the hill, right into the midst of the cattle came barking and bouncing a big brown wolf. He was snarling too, in a most ferocious way.

Mother Sheep still dozed lazily, not even so much as stirring, for she thought this big wolf was a dog, and so did Mum, who was waiting for her cowboy to come home to supper. But Buck knew, and so did Silver, that here was a wolf, and the very worst kind of wolf, too, for he'd come to take the cows home to be milked.

"I'll draw a bead on him, Silver," said Buck.

"Give it to him in the eye, Buck."



"Yeah," and Buck drew his rod and was just about to let that wolf have it full in the eye, when he discovered that all his bullets were gone.

"Heckadoodle, Silver! I've used all my caps."

"Guess it took 'em all to chase off the rustlers."

"Guess it did. Takes a lot of ammunition to chase them, eh, Silver?"

"Yeah, cowboy!"

"Well," sighed Buck, "there goes the wolf with the cows. We can't do any more until to-morrow, I s'pose."

"S'pose not," said Silver, and he turned towards the stream and galloped once more to the home corral.

"It's supper-time anyway, Buck," he said. "I

feel the need of my oats.” Mother Sheep smiled again and shook her head at the fun they were having. Buck got down off the pony’s back, and as he brushed the dust from his beautiful chaps and silver spurs, he felt the sudden need for supper too. After all, the cookies weren’t much for a cowboy and a pony.

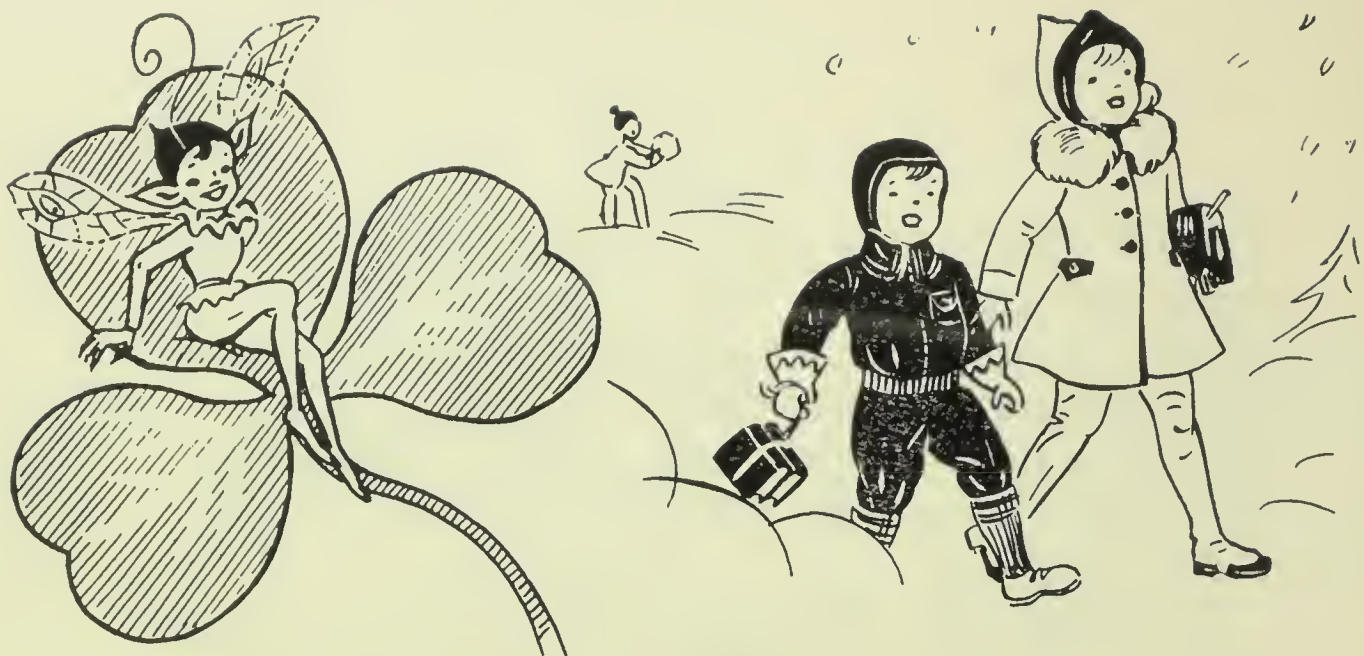
“Heckadoodle, Silver!” he said, snapping his red braces. “I think you’re right. I feel the need of *my* oats too. Better strike back to the ranch, I guess. S’long, pony.”

“S’long, cowboy.” And they both laughed merrily again and again and again.

The whole world was glad. The sun smiled, and the daisies swung to and fro in their glee.

Of course, if you had chanced to pass the meadow that day, and had happened to see a beautiful lamb with a shining black nose, *you* might have thought he *was* a lamb, when he was really a *pony*. And if you’d seen the freckled-faced boy with wiggly teeth, well you might have thought he *was* a boy, when he was really a *cowboy*. I said you *might* think these things, but I *know* you wouldn’t, for you and I understand, and that’s why

*I’m singing the funny song, I am,
Of a little boy and a little lamb,
Of how each of these little ones wanted to be
Something he wasn’t . . . so now you’ll see,
By turning their wishes into play,
They were happy . . . yes, happy . . . the livelong day.*



Owney and the Pooka

The O'Neills lived next door to the McGlinns, and the McGlinns lived next door to the O'Neills, so that made the O'Neills and the McGlinns neighbours, and it made Owney, that's the O'Neills' little boy, and Maggie, that's the McGlinns' little girl, playmates and friends.

One winter morning, Owney's eyes were wide with surprise. Maggie McGlinn had told him something, and the more he thought of that something the wider his eyes grew. Maggie had always told him the truth, and yet . . . well . . . well, he just couldn't believe that she had seen a fairy, and he told Maggie so.

"Sure an' who cares if you believe it or not?" said Maggie throwing herself into the snow to make an angel. "Sure an' I don't, for one."

"But, Maggie," said Owney, "I . . . well, Maggie, how did it happen, anyway?"

"I told you before how it happened last year on St. Patrick's Day, and if you don't believe

me, may the fairies turn you into a hobgoblin," said Maggie.

Owney's blue eyes filled with terror, and Maggie hurriedly laughed. "Ah, sure an' I'm only fooling you there," she said. "But it's true what I told you, true, true, true."

"But how'd you find out, Maggie?" asked Owney.

"How did I find out, you're wanting to know. Well it had been a bit warmish, and I was after being lazy, so 'twas evening when I started me chores. Me mother was over to O'Flanagan's, or troth an' I'd a been done long afore," said Maggie.

"Yes, go on, Maggie," said Owney.

"Well, we'd been making feather beds that day, and lots of the down was still about . . . it's that hard to gather up. And as I swept the wee bits towards the hearth, a pooka called to me to stop," said Maggie.

"A pooka?" said Owney, his eyes now full of questioning.

"Sure an' you say you're Irish, and you don't know what a pooka is?" said Maggie.

"But I'm only seven, Maggie McGlinn, and I can't be expected to know everything," said Owney O'Neill.

"Sure an' I suppose that's true," said Maggie. She was nine and felt her great age. "Well, Owney," she explained, "a pooka is a solitary fairy. That," she added grandly, "is one who plays all alone."

"Oh," said Owney. "And what did the pooka want with the feathers, Maggie?"

"To make him a coat to save him from the cruel winds of winter," said Maggie. "For—would you believe it, Owney?—all he had on him was green jersey leggin's and a wee cap of red."

"Oh!" said Owney. "And did you give him the feathers you were sweeping, Maggie?"

"I did better nor that," said Maggie. "I put me hand in the feather bed, and I gave him enough down to make him a nest."

"Oh!" said Owney again.

"And 'twas *then* he told me he'd do me chores for me on me birthday, and he did. Not one tap of work did I strike the whole of the day." And Maggie McGlinn winked.

Owney's blue eyes sparkled at the very thought . . . not one tap of work the whole of a day, not one stick of kindling to carry, not one errand to run, no school work to do . . . oh, just to go to school and never so much as lift a pencil! He just must meet a pooka. But how?

"How can I meet a pooka, Maggie?" he asked. "I've no feathers."

"Well, sure an' there's other things that's warm and cozy besides feathers." And off skipped Maggie McGlinn, singing lustily of a thrush on a hillside.

"Lots of things that's nice and warm? My sweater is nice and warm. Yarn! That's it, yarn! I'll get yarn for the fairies. I'll hang it on the bare, brown rose-bush, for no fairy living but would stop under a rose-bush sometime or other," said the little boy.



Owney rang Mrs. O'Flaherty's door-bell. "Well, Owney O'Neill," said that lady, "and what can I be after doing for you this fine winter morning?"

"Just be looking in your sewing basket to see if you've some wee bits of yarn," said Owney, smiling.

Mrs. O'Flaherty laughed. "Is it knitting that you're taking up in your old age, Owney?" she said.

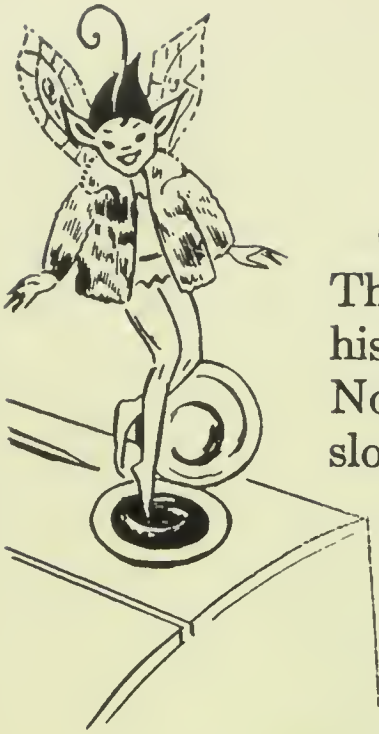
"No," said Owney. "I want it for the fairies to make them a coat. It's a cold wind that's blowing."

"You're a fine lad to be thinking of the little folk, and I'll be getting the yarn for you."

With the help of the neighbours, all kindly like Mrs. O'Flaherty, Owney O'Neill soon had a bundle of yarn that would dazzle a rainbow. He left it under the rose-bush, and next morning it was gone, as true as there's music in the robin's throat. Owney hurried to tell Maggie McGlinn.

"Of course," agreed Maggie, "it's the pooka."

Owney O'Neill could hardly wait for his birthday; but he did, for there was nothing else to do. At last the day came, with a sky especially blue, with a sun especially bright, and with a little sunbeam that slid in Owney's window and kissed his freckled nose, just to tell him to wake up, that here was another year.



Owney waked, and looked for the pooka. There was none. He dressed slowly, straining his ears for a fairy tap on the window-pane. None came. Slowly he stirred his porridge; slowly he ate his porridge, thinking maybe he'd find a pooka among the soft kernels of the meal, but he did not. He was sure among his birthday gifts he would come upon the wee one, but not a sign of him.

"Ah, sure an' I might have known better than to believe Maggie McGlinn." And he went to school.

There was so much to see on the way to school . . . you know how it is, don't you? There are people and kittens and little brown dogs, and houses and telephone poles and birds and squirrels, and Owney peered anxiously among them looking for a pooka. He could see none. Even when the silvery tongue of the school bell clanged out, "School time, school time, school time," Owney was still hoping.

Miss Belmont, the teacher, welcomed all her children and Owney O'Neill. All her children and Owney O'Neill said their morning prayer. All her children and Owney O'Neill sang their morning hymn.

"And now," said Miss Belmont, "work will begin."

"Yes," said Owney to himself. "Work'll begin. I never get a holiday. I just should have known better than to believe Maggie McGlinn."

"Oh, I don't know about that!" said a voice, right out loud, so loud it echoed through the room:

and the lid of the little ink-well on Owney's desk lifted, and the head of a fairy poked its way out.

"The pooka," whispered Owney.

"Yes," said the little fellow. "And see my new coat." And he ran across Owney's slate to show his warm little jacket of rainbow yarn.

"Thank you, Owney, it was mighty nice of you to get me this coat, and here I am to do all your work for you to-day." And he turned a somersault over Owney's blue pencil-box and landed right on his sponge. He laughed loudly and merrily.

"Sh," whispered Owney.

Miss Belmont turned from the book table.

"A little less noise, please," she said.

The fairy laughed again—this time uproariously.

"Who is that?" questioned Miss Belmont.

"It's Owney," said Janie Dalton. Janie told on everyone. She was like that.

"Tattle-tale, tattle-tale, tattle-tale," sang the pooka.

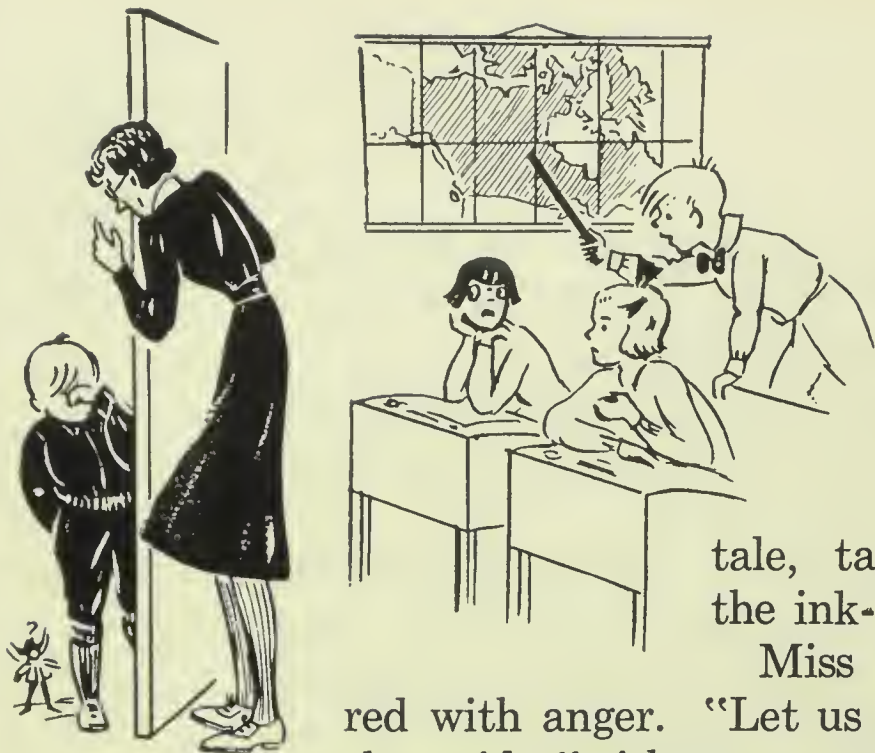
"Owney?" said the teacher. "Why, I'm surprised!" The pooka dived into the ink-well.

"I . . . I wasn't doing anything," said Owney.

"Well, alright, Owney, but . . ."

The top of the ink-well lifted, and the pooka winked saucily at Owney. Owney shook his head, but the fairy just laughed again and jumped up and down. *Clink* went the lid of the ink-well. *Clink, clink!*





"Who is doing that?" said Miss Belmont.

"Owney," said Janie.

"Tattle-tale, tattle-tale, tattle-tale," came from the ink-well.

Miss Belmont's face grew red with anger. "Let us go on with our work," she said, "without any further trouble."

Clink went the ink-well, and out on the slate again came the pooka. In a flash the work was done, and the pooka started to sing.

"Sh . . . sh . . . please," whispered Owney.

"Why should I hush?" said the pooka. "I have my work done, I'm feeling fine, it's a nice day, and I have a new coat." Then he sang:

*"Oh! I have a new coat, and it's red, and it's blue,
And it's green, and it's purple and yellow.
Oh! it's pink, and it's brown, and it's scarlet and white,
And it makes me a very fine fellow.*

*It was given to me by Owney O'Neill.
He gathered the yarn from his neighbours and friend.
Believe me, it's true. I like this coat, too,
And it stretches and stretches whenever I bend.*

*Saint right for the daddy, saint toorle i addy
Saint right for the daddy, saint toorle i ay.*

"Sh . . . sh," pleaded Owney.

But Miss Belmont was coming down the aisle again. Janie Dalton gasped in delightful anticipation. The other children sat very still.

"Owney," began Miss Belmont.

"I didn't do it, Miss Belmont, . . . honest, I didn't. It was . . . it was a pooka," said the distracted Owney.

"Tattle-tale, tattle-tale, tattle-tale," came from the ink-well.

Miss Belmont looked about confusedly. "A what, did you say?" she asked.

"A pooka," said Owney.

"And what is a pooka?" *Clink* went the ink-well.

"What is a pooka?" went on Miss Belmont.

"It's a . . . a fairy," said Owney.

"A fairy! I see. And would you have me believe that we've fairies in the class-room?"

"Yes, Miss Belmont. You see, it's my birthday."

"Oh, is it?"

"Yes."

Clink went the ink-well.

"Stop that, Owney."

"It was the . . ."

"Tattle-tale, tattle-tale, tattle-tale!"

"That's enough, Owney. Take your books, and go home. When you are ready to do your work and act properly, come back . . . not before."

Clink went the ink-well, and *out* went the disgraced Owney O'Neill. He threw himself on a bank of snow and cried.

"I'll cry for you," said the pooka, springing up from dear knows where.

"Oh, no, you won't!" said Owney. "I'll do my own crying."

But the fairy had promised to do all Owney's work that day, so he sat down on the toe of Owney's sturdy boot and cried bitterly.

"Oh, go away, go away!" said Owney. And he moved his foot angrily.

The pooka fell to the ground. As he did so, his little yarn coat caught in one of the eyelets of Owney's shoe.

Owney started for home, and the coat started to ravel.

"Wait, wait!" called the fairy, but the angry little boy went his way.

The wee one clung to some dead grasses, while his little coat was unwound from his shoulders. Shivering in the winter wind, he made his way back to fairyland.

"Owney's cross," he said to a snow-bird. "But I did my best. You see, I've never been to school before."

Maggie McGlinn found Owney in a tangle of rainbow yarn.

"How'd you ever get messed up this way, Owney?" she asked.

"This isn't the worst mess, I'm in. And it's all your fault, too," he said, breaking off a bit of yellow yarn. "This is the pooka's coat."



"Oh, so he came!" said the delighted Maggie.

"Yes, he came. He came alright. And he got me into a nice fix, too. He was in my ink-well, mind you, and he acted something fierce. He even sang: 'Oh! I have a new coat, and it's red, and it's green, and it's blue, and it's brown, and it's yellow . . . saint right for the daddy, saint toorle i addy.' Oh, yes, he came alright!"

"But, Owney," said Maggie, "surely you're not after blamin' the wee one. Fairies don't go to school. You wouldn't be blamin' him, would you?"

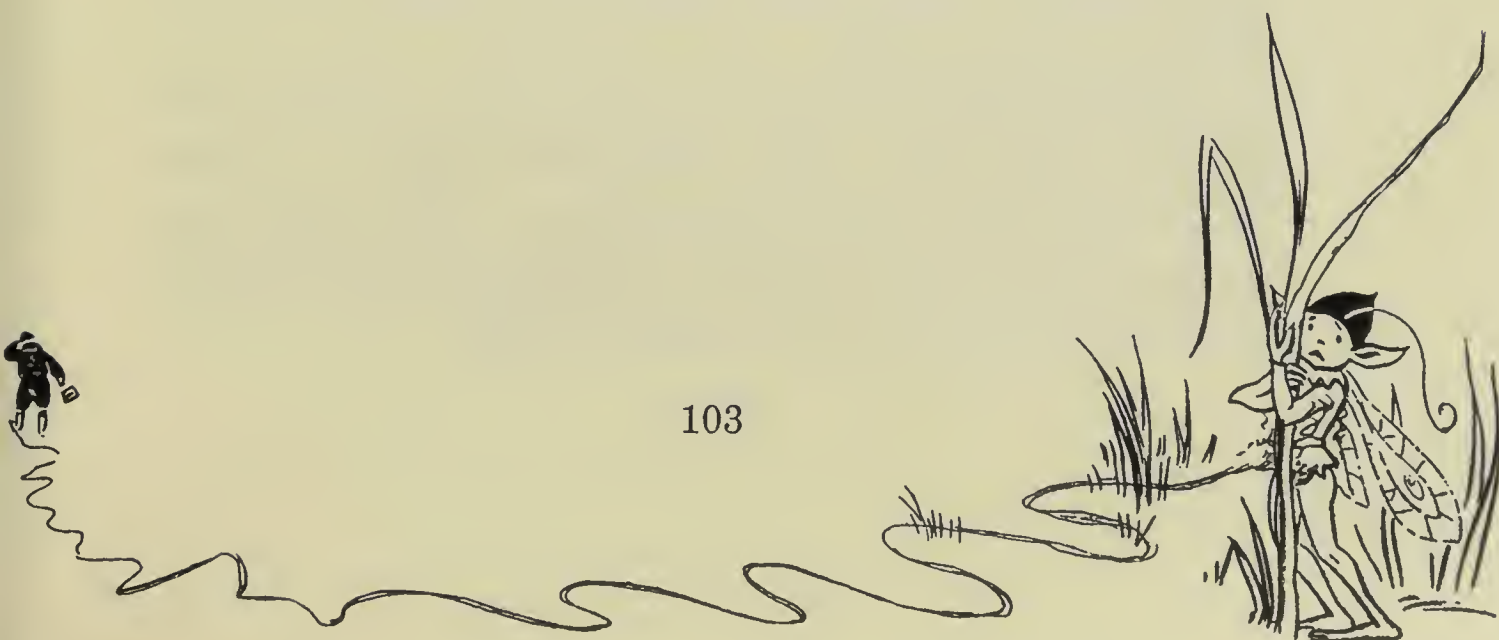
Owney's face flushed, and he hung his head. "Yes, I was blaming him. I should be ashamed . . . expecting a fairy to do work I should be doing myself. He did all my questions, too. He even offered to cry for me, Maggie."

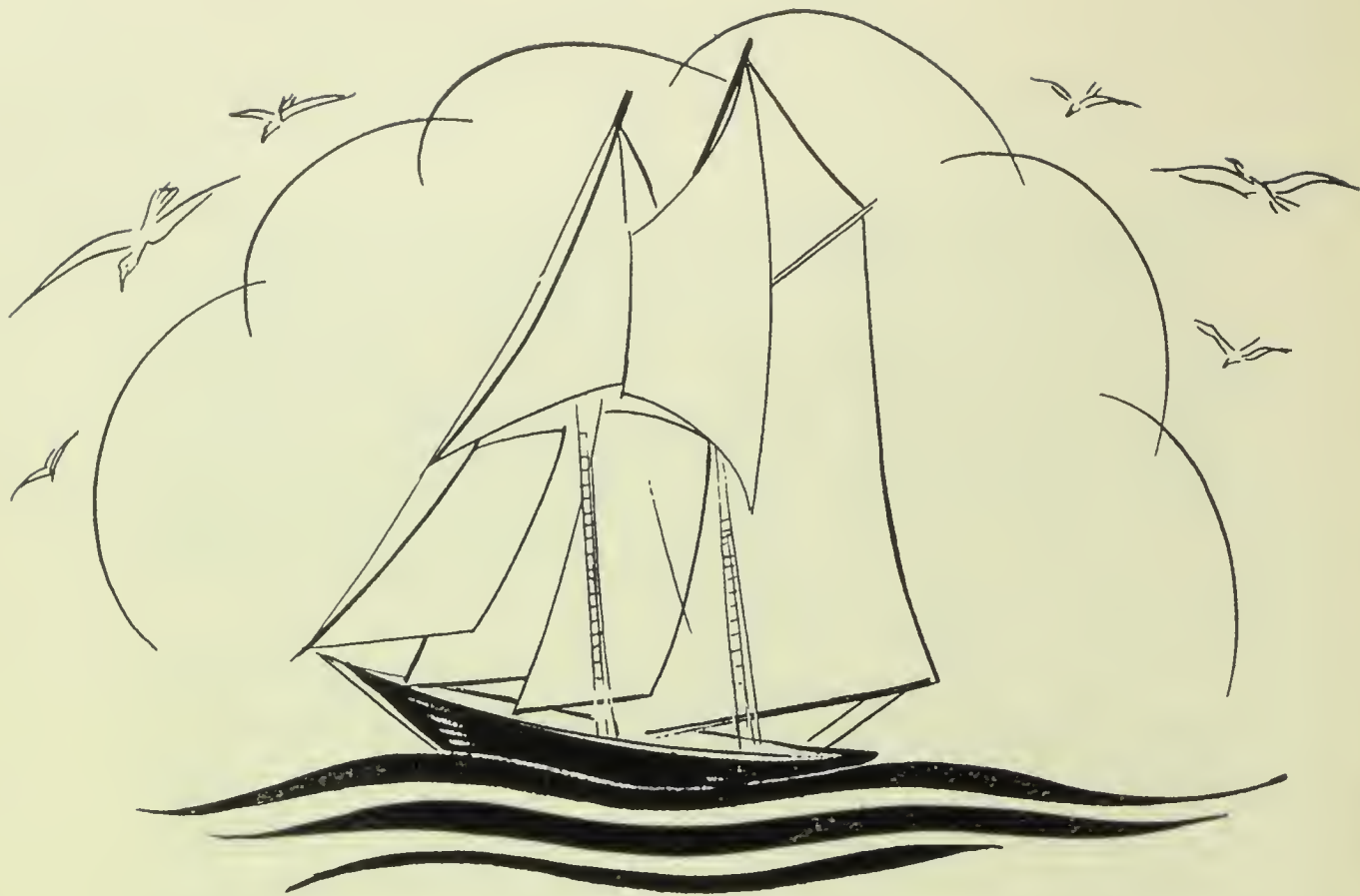
"Yes, he would that," said Maggie.

"I wish I could find him to tell him that I'm sorry," said Owney.

"Listen," said Maggie.

The song of a snow-bird told Owney O'Neill that the pooka understood.





Getting Together

Patrick James Andrew McTavish sat on the doorstep. Patrick James Andrew McTavish was a big name for such a little man, for Patrick James Andrew McTavish was five come this third of May. Jabez Pye sat on the doorstep. Jabez Pye was a little name for such a big man, for Jabez Pye was five and eighty come this second of February. One was five, and one was five and eighty, and they both sat on the doorstep.

Jabez had been cleaning driveways, for that was Jabez's work—to clean driveways and to clean driveways and to clean driveways. The other part of his work was to talk to Patrick James Andrew McTavish, whom Jabez called Paddy.

Jabez said: "Now let's get together on this thing, Paddy."

"All right," said Paddy, "'cause there's nothing like getting together on things."

"That's right," said Jabez. "Now you say that ten cents is no good."

"And that's as true as true, Jabez. It's not one bit of good, because—do you know what, Jabez?—I want to build a ship—a great big ship. And there's no use trying to build a ship with just ten cents, now is there?"

"Well, no, I don't suppose there is. But why do you want a ship, anyway? You have a cart, a scooter, and a pair of roller skates; and there's no pond in your back-yard as far as I can see," said Jabez Pye.

"Jabez Pye, I'm surprised," said Patrick James Andrew McTavish. "I'm surprised, and you an old sailor, too. I don't want to sail a ship in my own back-yard. I want to sail far away and see Santa Claus."

"To see Santa Claus? Oh, now, Paddy," said Jabez Pye, "it's my turn to be surprised! Who ever heard tell of seeing Santa Claus in September?"

"I did," said Paddy McTavish. "That's the trouble with Christmas. If a few people would see Santa Claus before the rush, it would be better, and I wouldn't be getting a tin horn then, instead of a jack-knife. And so if I had enough money, I'd build a ship and go and see Santa Claus and tell him a few things that he needs to know about

fellows. But how can I go with just ten cents? I just can't go, now can I, Jabez?"

"Well now, Paddy, I suppose that's true too. But do you know what I think, Mister Man?"

"No, what do you think, Mister Other Man?" answered Paddy.

"I think," said Jabez, his five-and-eighty-year-old eyes twinkling, "I think that it's all in the way you look at it. Now if I were you, I'd just take that ten cents and make it go as far as I could, and, well . . ."

"You're right, Jabez. That's what I'll do. That's what comes from getting together on things. But, Jabez, how can I make the ten cents go far when I've never been any farther than Sunday school myself?"

Jabez scratched his jolly old chin. "Let's look at this ten cents," he said, "and we'll figure the thing out."

Paddy opened a fat fist, and in it lay a silver coin with a silver picture of the king.

"The king, God bless him!" said Jabez Pye.

"No, God *save* him, Jabez—that's what I always sing," said Paddy McTavish.

"Well, let's get together on this thing, too," said Jabez. "God bless him *and* save him."

"Yes, because he's good, and he's on my ten cents. And, oh-h-h-h-h! Look what's on the other side—a ship!"

"Of course," said the man who was five and eighty. "It's a ship of the king's navy."

This was exciting. Here he, Patrick James Andrew McTavish, had a ship from the king's navy right in his hand, and he was grumbling to Jabez Pye. Oh, no, there was nothing like getting together on things!

Jabez smoothed the lovely silver sails with a kindly wrinkled hand. Jabez had sailed the seven seas when he was a boy, and he told Paddy so.

"Jabez, do you know what? When I get to be five and eighty, I'm going to sail the eight seas."

"That'll be fine, Paddy, just fine," said Jabez. "The king will be proud of you."

"And I'll be proud of him, too. But, Jabez, I should go now, when I'm five without the eighty."

"Well, why don't you, Mister Man?" asked Jabez Pye.

"But I've no ship, Mister Other Man. You know I haven't," said Paddy McTavish.

Jabez looked at Paddy McTavish. "What's the matter with the one in your hand?" he asked.

Paddy's heart pounded as he looked down again at the still shining little silver ship in his hand. How he'd love to ride under her silver sails, on and on into the sunset, on and on into the sunrise, and on again. Oh, that was the life for a five-year-old man!

"Jabez Pye," Paddy almost whispered, "Jabez, would you . . . would you know *how* we could sail on this silver boat?"



"Yes, yes, I'd know . . . or I would know if I could remember the password, but it's been so long ago since I was to sea . . . so long, long ago that I'm afraid I've forgotten."

"Oh, think, Jabez, think hard!" said Paddy McTavish.

A great silence fell over the two men—the little one with the big name and the big one with the little name.

And Jabez Pye scratched his chin again, and he rolled his eyes, now north, now south, now east; but when he looked into the gray streaked west, he remembered the password, and he sang:

*"Silver, silver, silver sea,
Send your silver ship to me.
Sail me o'er the silver foam,
Silver ship, then sail me home,
Silver ship, then sail me home."*

And with three winks of his right eye and three winks of his left, he threw the ten cents over his shoulder, sneezed three times and turned.

And Paddy McTavish turned around too, and there before them was a shining ship of silver on a silver stream, with a silver-haired captain standing by a silver rail.

"Well, Jabez Pye, upon my word," said the captain in a silvery voice. "Where, in all this wide world of Sundays and Mondays, did you come from? I thought you'd given up sailing the seven seas for the cleaning of driveways."



"I did," said Jabez. "I'm too old for the navy now, Captain. I'm five and eighty."

"To be sure, to be sure. And this gentleman with you?"

Paddy's chest swelled with pride. It was nice to be called a gentleman, and it was nice to meet the captain of the king's navy. But Paddy did not speak. He left that for Jabez, and Jabez said: "This is Patrick James Andrew McTavish, Captain. He's not quite ready to leave his mother yet; he's been with her so short a time, it would not be fair; but in a few years, he wants to serve the king, God bless him."

"And God save him," said Paddy.

"God bless him and save him," said the captain. And Paddy smiled at that, for that's what came from getting together.

"All ready, below?" called the captain.

"Aye, aye, sir. Where to, sir?"

The friendly captain looked right at Paddy, and Paddy looked at Jabez Pye.

"Go ahead," said Jabez, "tell him."

"Well, Captain," said Paddy, "I'd like to go north to Santa Claus's place, for there are a lot of things I'd like to get settled before Christmas comes again."

"I bet Santa's still bringing you tin horns and balloons instead of knives; and say, you must be nearly five now."

"Come this third of May," said Paddy.

"Well then, it's about time a few things were settled. *Heave away!*"



And to the north they sailed away in a sea of silver and a sky of gold, and Paddy McTavish and Jabez Pye went sailing and sailing and sailing away, singing:

*"Silver, silver, silver sea,
Send your silver ship to me.
Sail me o'er the silver foam,
Silver ship, then sail me home,
Silver ship, then sail me home."*

Along shores of blossoms all rosy violet and blue and gold they went, and on and on until the flowers changed to flakes of snow and the butterflies put on white fur pantaloons. And Paddy McTavish and Jabez Pye were glad that they had got together on this thing. They stood very still by the silver rail, each holding the other's hand, and sailed on to the frosty northland.

And then out of the winter stillness came a laugh—a merry, big laugh like Merry Christmas,—and Jabez nodded: "It's he all right."

And Paddy said: "Let's investigate."

"Yes, let's," said Jabez Pye, and they called to the captain to *heave to*; and he hove to, and Paddy McTavish and Jabez Pye went down the gang-plank, still holding hands and being together.

"Well upon my new white teddy bears, if it isn't Jabez Pye!" said Santa Claus, and he shook hands with Jabez. Everybody seemed to know Jabez. "And who is this you have with you? Let me shine my specs and have a look at him. Why, it's Paddy McTavish! I know you. I took you a tin bugle and a silver horn . . ."

"Yes," said Jabez, "but this year he wants knives and perhaps a ship. Have you any ships?"

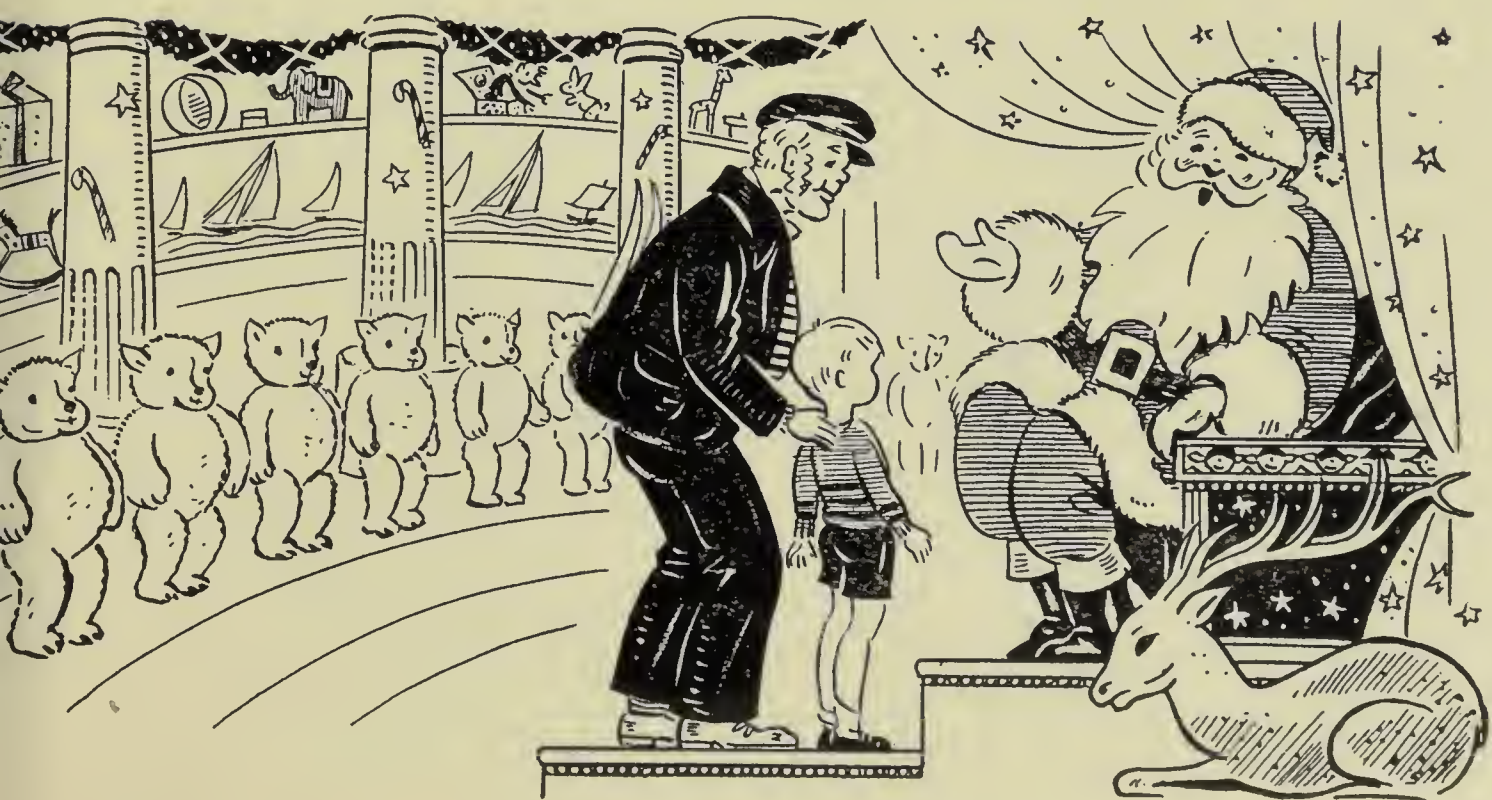
"We came in a ship—a silver ship," said Paddy McTavish.

"From the king's navy," said Jabez Pye.

"The king, God bless him," said Santa Claus.

"God bless him and *save* him," said Jabez Pye.

"And now let's see your boats, for we've long miles ahead." And Santa Claus took the two men to his yards of ships. There were wee ones that would fit stockings; there were those that could be set 'neath a Christmas tree; there were lake-sized sail-boats and big three-masted schooners that Paddy loved.



" 'Tis like the ships of Jabez Pye, Paddy. He was as brave a sailor and as fine a man as ever sailed the seven seas," said Santa Claus.

"I know," said Paddy. "And he's my friend, and he knew the password to bring me here. It goes:

*Silver, silver, silver sea,
Send your silver ship to me.
Sail me o'er the silver foam,
Silver ship, then sail me home,
Silver ship, then sail me home."*

And they turned again, did Paddy and Jabez, and found themselves right home again; and they sat down side by side on the doorstep again.

"Ten cents goes a long way, Jabez," said Paddy.

"It's all in the way you look at things, Paddy," said Jabez Pye, who was five and eighty come this second of February.

"It's all in the way you look at things," said Patrick James Andrew McTavish, who was five come this third of May.



JUST MARY AGAIN

GEORGE

THE LITTLE RAT WHO DIDN'T LISTEN

This is a very sad story. It's about Georgie, the little rat who didn't listen. And if you haven't got your own handkerchief, and your mother's handkerchief, and your father's handkerchief, and your sister's handkerchief, and your brother's handkerchief, all ready and waiting, you'd best run and get them right now, for you're going to need them. I'll wait for you . . . one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten! Are you back? Well, then, it was like this . . .

Georgie was a rat—not an ordinary rat, mind you, for he could ride a bicycle. He was a handsome brown fellow, with eyes that smiled and teeth that flashed. And he was nice. He had just one fault. He didn't listen.

I'll never forget the time I played "Old Black Joe" on the piano for him, and then asked him how he liked it. "Oh, fine," he said, "but I didn't know you





played the violin." And I'll never forget the time I told him that school

opened September the first, and he didn't get there until Christmas. But those are just little things.

We used to wonder if perhaps his tam o'shanter had something to do with it, for he wore a tam o'shanter down over one ear. But it wasn't the tam o'shanter, for he could always hear the dinner bell. It was ringing now.

Two leaps, and Georgie was unfolding his napkin.

"Mummy," he said to his pretty gray mother, "Mummy, I thought we were going to have fish and chips for dinner to-day. If I'd known we were having macaroni and cheese, I wouldn't have come home."

"Where would you have gone?" asked Mother Rat.

"I'd have gone to Grandmother's. She'd have had fish and chips, most likely," said Georgie.

"Yes," said Mother, "and if she didn't have fish and chips, she'd get them for you, eh? Well, you can't charm me with your smile and your bicycle riding, Master Georgie, . . . not me."

"But you said 'fish and chips,' Mum. You said 'fish and chips' on the telephone. I heard you. You did say it," said Georgie.

"Yes, I did say it," said Mother Rat. "But I said they were for Sunday dinner, not to-day. You see, the trouble with you, Georgie, is that you hear, but you don't listen. You never get things straight. And some day your not listening will get you into trouble."

"Oh, I don't know," said Georgie. And he helped himself to the steaming scallop. "I don't miss much."

"You missed the last chapter in *The House in Haunted Hollow* on the radio, just because you didn't listen to the announcer saying that the time had changed," said Mother.

"Yes, and cat's whiskers, I was sorry too! Rosie told me what happened, but it wasn't the same. But that's your fault, Mummy. You should have called me in," said the little rat.

Mrs. Rat looked at Georgie sharply. He dropped his eyes.

"I'm sorry, Mummy. And do you know, Mummy, this scallop is most as good as fish and chips? Did you know that? Doesn't Rosie want any?"

"Rosie had her lunch early, dear," said Mother Rat. "She's gone to the circus."

"The circus?" said Georgie in surprise. "But I didn't know about it. Where's the circus?"

"The same place the circus always is, when it's in town, Georgie," said Mother.

"Over in the ball field!" said Georgie. "Why didn't somebody tell me?"

"Somebody did tell you. Somebody told you a week ago. But somebody else was patching an old bicycle tire, and somebody didn't hear about the big contest that is over at the . . ."

Georgie waited to hear no more. He threw his table napkin hurriedly aside, tipped his tam o'shanter over his other ear, and ran pell-mell for the ball field.



He could hardly believe his own eyes. The place was milling with people. The big tents were up. Banners were flying. Bands were playing.

And there was the Circus Man himself.

"Ovah heah, ovah heah, ladies and gentlemen! On this platform before you to-day you will shortly see the distinguished entrants to our big stunt contest. And now, here they come . . . up the ramp to the platform. First, we have Mr. Wilfred Whiskers, well-known local boy who claims he can gnaw a pine tree through in twenty seconds."

The applause was tremendous.

"Next we have little Miss Jenny Jumpalot. What is it that you do Jenny?" asked the smiling man.

"I . . . I . . . I . . . skip. I can skip. I'm the best rope-skipper in Ratville," giggled Jenny.

Georgie's eyes flashed with indignation.

"That's not true," he cried. "She is not."

Everyone turned to look at him.

"Well, it's not true," he said, as if in answer. "She isn't the best skipper in Ratville. My sister Rosie is the best skipper in town. I guess I should know. She outskipped Jenny Jumpalot only yesterday, down at the wharf, so I'm not going to stand here and . . ."

"George, Georgie!"

Georgie looked to the platform again when he heard his name called, and saw his sister Rosie in her familiar pink gingham, now hand in hand with Jenny.

Georgie's eyes widened in surprise. "Oh, hello, Rosie!" he said. "What are you doing with Jenny?"



"Jenny and I are jumping together," said his sister. "We're doing a double act, and you shouldn't come down here making a scene either."

"I'm sorry, mister," said Georgie, turning again to the circus man. "But you see, Rosie is really good with the rope, and . . . well . . ."

The circus man smiled kindly.

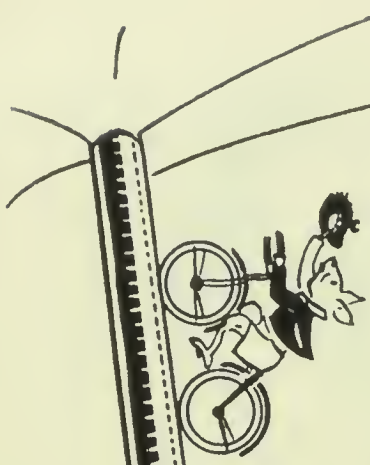
"That's all right, Georgie," he said. "I like to see a boy stick up for his sister. But what I can't understand is why your sister didn't tell you that she was going to enter the contest to-day."

"I can't understand that either," said Georgie. "Why didn't you tell me, Rosie?"

"I did tell you," said Rosie. "I told you the night you were patching your bicycle tire."

"Well, I didn't hear you," said her brother.

"No, I don't suppose you did. That's just the trouble with you. You didn't hear me because you didn't listen. He never listens, mister. If he'd listened, he could have been down here this afternoon with his bicycle, and won the prize, most likely."



The minute that Rosie said the word *bicycle*, all the people began to cheer. They knew Georgie and his bicycle. They knew he was the best cyclist in these parts. They knew he could outride anyone, and they thought he could easily be a world champion if he had the chance to show his skill.

The circus man became interested. He called Georgie to the platform.

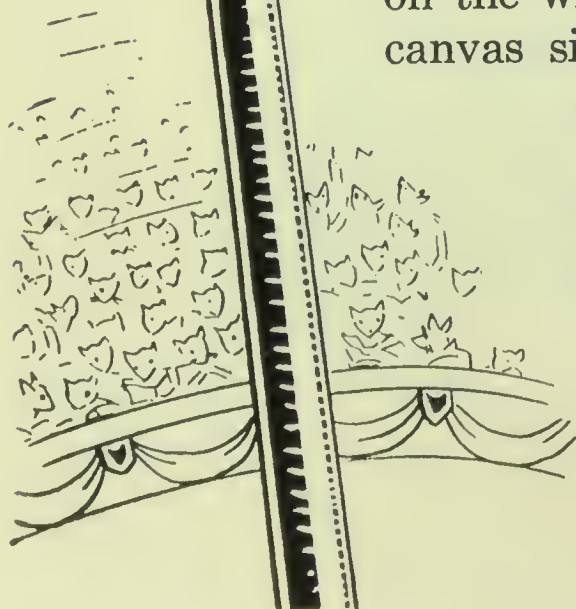
"Go home for your wheel, Georgie," he said. "I'll hold the show up until you get back. Hurry now, and we'll see what you can do."

Georgie hurried. He returned just in time to be the last one in the show.

He took his bicycle by the handle-bars and walked out in front of the crowd. He mounted the wheel and rode right up the centre pole of the big tent. Once on the top, he removed his tam o'shanter and waved it to the admiring crowds.

Rosie held her breath as she watched her brother with frightened but admiring eyes. Now he was on the tight ropes. Now he was on the wires. Now he was whirling on the canvas sides of the great tent, waving his tam o'shanter all the while.

The circus man stood open-mouthed. In all his circus days, he had never seen the like of this.



The circus man went home with Georgie.

"No," said Georgie's mother, when the circus man unfolded his plans. "Georgie may not join the circus."

"But, madam," said the circus man, "the boy is a wonder. He's a marvel. He's mighty. He's magnetic. He's magnificent. Why, he has an act there the like of which has never been seen in the world before."

"I'm very proud to hear you say that, sir," said Mrs. Rat. "I'm very proud indeed, but Georgie may not go with you."

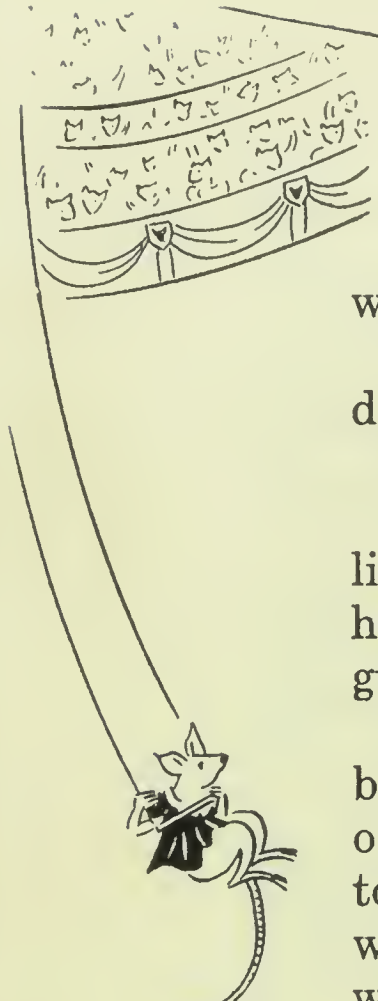
Georgie was breathing heavily. He knew what was worrying his mother.

"But, Mummy, I'll be careful," he said. "Cat's whiskers, Mum, you know me for riding the wires! You know I've never fallen once, and I'm never sick."

"I'm not worrying about your health, Georgie. And I'm not worrying about your riding . . . much. But I am worrying about the fact that you never listen. You'd ride ropes that weren't there, because you hadn't listened when you were told they were taken down. You'd never know where the lion's cage was, because you'd neglected to listen when you were told about it. I'd never sleep another wink as long as I lived, if I knew you were off riding in a circus."

The circus man explained to Mrs. Rat that in the show business, Georgie would have to listen . . . that





"Did you hear me, Georgie?" said the man. "No ropes to the corners . . . no wires to ride. Well, good luck!"

The man went out of the dressing-room. The door slammed behind him.

Georgie looked up.

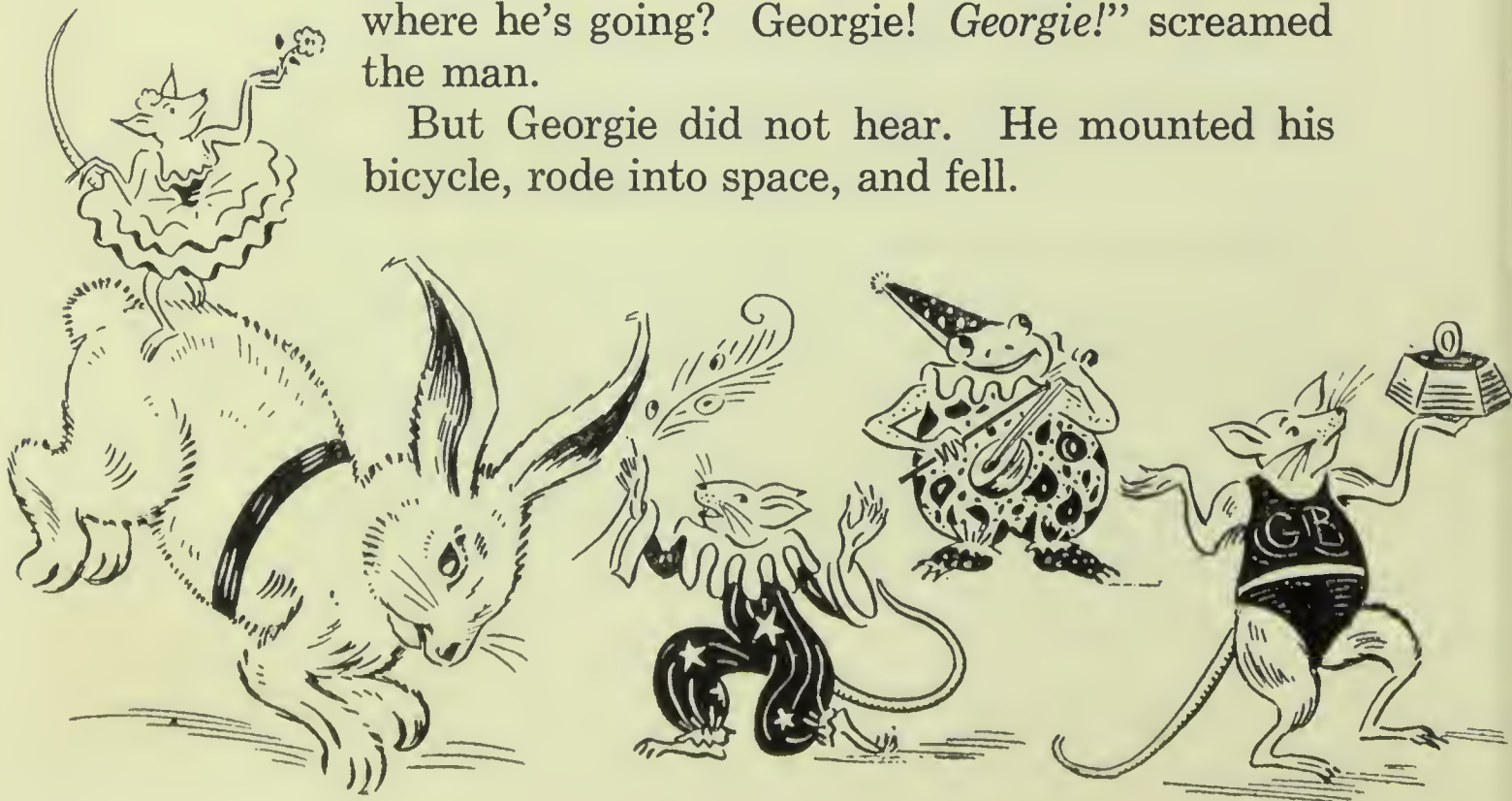
"What . . . what did you say? I wasn't listening to you. I was fixing my boots. Oh, he's gone! Well," said Georgie to himself, "I guess it's not important anyway."

The crowd cheered as usual as Georgie rode his bicycle up the centre pole. He waved his tam o'shanter as always, and then faced his machine towards the south corner of the big hall. He was smiling all the while and never once looking where he was going.

The circus man stood quietly below.

"What's he doing? Where's he going?" he cried then, as he watched Georgie. "I told him there were no ropes there. Why doesn't he look where he's going? Georgie! *Georgie!*" screamed the man.

But Georgie did not hear. He mounted his bicycle, rode into space, and fell.





"Oh-h-h-h-h-h!" screamed the crowd.

They carried a battered Georgie out of the ring. He would ride no more.

Back in his old wooden bed under the stairs, he lay sobbing to his mother: "I didn't listen, Mum. He told me there were no wires there, but I didn't listen. Oh, Mum, I should have listened!"

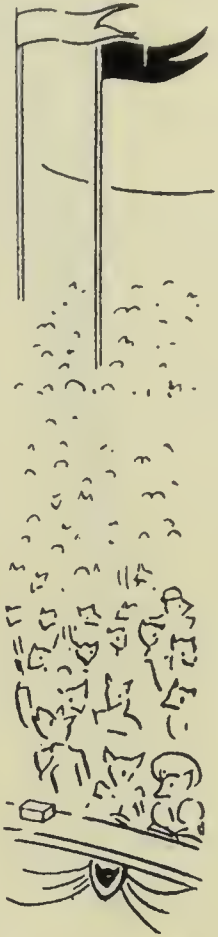
"I know," said Mother, "but it'll be all right. Everything will work out all right. You'll see. And, Georgie, are you listening now?"

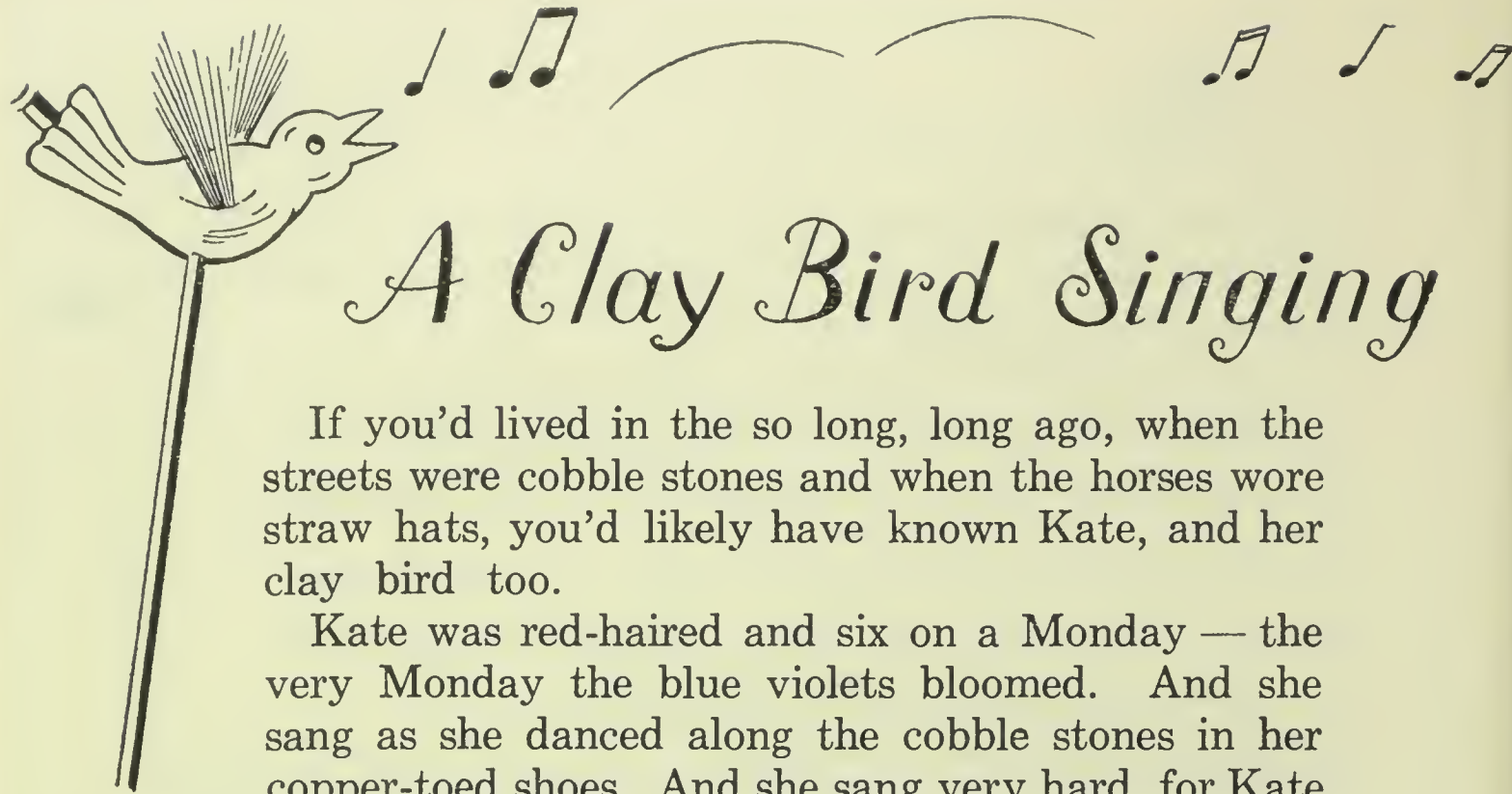
"Yes, Mum," said Georgie.

"Well, I'm glad," said Mrs. Rat, "for I want you to hear this. We're having fish and chips for supper to-night."

Georgie smiled.

But don't *you* dare smile, because this is a sad story. It is so sad that I expect by now your handkerchief and your mother's handkerchief and your father's handkerchief and your sister's handkerchief and your brother's handkerchief are dripping with tears. If they're not, *shame on you*.





A Clay Bird Singing

If you'd lived in the so long, long ago, when the streets were cobble stones and when the horses wore straw hats, you'd likely have known Kate, and her clay bird too.

Kate was red-haired and six on a Monday — the very Monday the blue violets bloomed. And she sang as she danced along the cobble stones in her copper-toed shoes. And she sang very hard, for Kate sang the hardest and hopped the hardest and laughed the hardest of anyone in the whole wide world. For Kate was happy.

She lived in a wee pink house that nestled beneath two elms and a weeping willow tree. And she played with hens and pigs and a duck, and she played with Cassandra Victoria Maude, who lived next door, and with Parlour Tongs, who lived across the street. Parlour Tongs was a boy — a long, gangling boy, — and Kate called him Parlour Tongs, just to herself. His real name was Ellis.

"He's got such funny long legs," she said, "and he's sort of dull. But I think he likes me, though I don't know for sure. And I'll never tell anyone Parlour Tongs is his name, except the violets."

But the violets knew. They knew all of Kate's secrets, and they'd never tell. They knew about her yellow bird, too. She got it for her birthday, and it was the best present of all the presents. It was

better than the red plaid gimp, better than the white lace gauntlets, better than the candy scissors, this yellow bird, for it looked so exciting. It was made of clay and painted corn colour. It had two silken wings, and it lived on a stick.

I suppose you think that's not exciting. But just wait till you hear! That clay bird could whistle, as true as true. You just had to blow, and the whistle came.

"Listen, Cassandra!" said the happy Kate. "Just listen! It sings." And Kate blew into the bird.

"I don't hear anything so much," said Cassandra. "I just hear a whistle — a plain whistle like you can get in a popcorn bag any old day. And I've a music box that plays a tune, and I've a doll that squeaks."

"But listen, Cassandra!" went on Kate. "Can't you hear? It really sings, this yellow bird. It's telling me things. Cassie, can't you hear?" Kate blew again.

"I don't hear a thing," said Cassandra, still unimpressed. "What does it say?"

"Why, it sings," said Kate. "It's singing to me:

*Kate, I am your yellow bird.
Come and play with me.
We shall fly the wide world
o'er
And see what we can see.*

Isn't that lovely, Cassandra?"





Cassandra looked at her red-headed little friend with all the scorn she could gather into her own freckled face.

"Kate," she said, "do you know what I think?"

"No, what do you think?" said Kate.

"I think you're silly, for that bird never sang that song at all. You did," said Cassandra.

"That's not true, Cassandra," said Kate, her wide blue eyes full of astonishment and hurt. How could Cassandra be so . . . well, how was it that she couldn't hear?

"Kate," said Cassandra, "I'm not going to play with you any more, unless you say that the bird just plain whistled."

"Well, I won't say it," said Kate firmly.

"All right for you then, Kate. All right for you," said Cassandra. "And Ellis won't play with you either, for I'll tell him how silly you are. And my mother wouldn't want me to play with you either, because you say things that aren't true."

Kate's bright eyes now filled with tears. She didn't want to lose Cassandra and Parlour Tongs. But she couldn't give in to what *she* knew was true. *She* had heard the bird singing. So she bit her lips and said stoutly: "Well, my mother wouldn't want me to play with you either, because anyone who is so . . . well, anyone who can't hear music when it comes right out of a yellow bird and calls to her, isn't the kind of little girl my mother wants me to play with. And Parlour . . . I mean Ellis, will play with me, for Ellis likes me."

"He won't like you when he hears you tell such stories. And Kate," said Cassandra grandly, "I'll take my doll rags and my green glass, please. They're in your tool chest."

"Not the green glass!" said Kate. "Can't I keep the green glass a little longer?"

"My green glass, please," said Cassandra Victoria Maude. "And you needn't come through the fence this afternoon either, for Ellis and I will be playing alone, together."

"All right, Cassandra," said Kate. "I won't be here anyway."

Cassandra stopped. This was news.

"Where are you going, Kate?" she asked.

Kate held her red head high.

"I'm going around the world and other places with my yellow bird," she said.

"Oh!" said Cassandra. "You're the worst whopperer in the whole town. I'm going to tell your mother on you."



"My mother's at the market," said Kate, "and even if she weren't, she wouldn't have the time to talk to . . . to worms."

"Oh!" said Cassandra again, and was gone.

Kate sat on the wood-horse and looked at her clay bird.

"I wish she hadn't got cross at me, yellow bird," she said. "I like Cassandra and her music box and her green glass. And I like Parlour Tongs, even if he is dull. But you did call to me, didn't you? You did sing the song, didn't you, yellow bird?" And Kate blew again. "I hear it . . . I hear it . . . I hear it singing. Oh, I wish . . .," and she dropped her red head to her pinafores lap, and softly cried into the green gingham checks. It was hard to be alone.

"What's the matter, Kate?" asked a voice beside her.

Kate didn't look up. She knew it was Parlour Tongs. She could see his long, gangling legs beside her, as he slipped his friendly hand into hers. He had come to her. He had left Cassandra.

"It . . . it's nothing, Ellis. I . . .," and she brightened. "Look . . . look at my birthday present, Ellis. A little yellow bird! Cassandra thinks it's just a clay bird, but it's got a real heart, and it can sing."

"Can it?" said Ellis.

"Didn't Cassandra tell you?" said Kate. "She took her green glass."

"Yes, she told me. I brought you some green glass to keep. Here," said Ellis, handing Kate a little box of wood.

"Oh, thank you, Ellis! Do you want to hear my bird? I'll blow it for you," said Kate.

"Let me blow it, Kate," said Ellis, "and you sing the words for me."

"All right," said Kate, and she sang:

*"Kate, I am your yellow bird.
Come and play with me.
We shall fly the wide world o'er
And see what we can see."*

"Did you hear it, Ellis? Did you hear the words?" asked the excited Kate.

"I should say I did. May I go with you around the world, Kate?" said Ellis.

"Oh, Ellis, would you? I didn't think you'd believe me; but you do, don't you?" said Kate.

"I heard it, didn't I?" said the long-legged boy.

"And you want to come?" said Kate delightedly.

"I'd love to see the wide world o'er. But we'll have to hurry, for Mum said if I were late for lunch again to-day, I'd have to go without, and we have griddle cakes."

"And we have doughboys," said the laughing Kate, "so I have to be back too. But it's going to be hard to see so much in so short a time with only two pairs of eyes to look."

"Yes, we need more eyes," said Parlour Tongs. "Two pairs are not enough. Now, let me think."

He walked up, and Kate walked down. And Kate walked up, and he walked down. And just when Kate was walking across, Parlour Tongs had an idea.

"Potatoes!" he said. "Potatoes have eyes."

And Kate looked at him with her two blue ones and wondered how she had ever thought him dull.

Down the cellar steps ran the red-haired girl and the long-legged boy, and with smiles in their hearts and potatoes in their pockets, the two children blew into the bird of clay.

Suddenly the cellar became full of light, and as if in a dream, a pathway to a castle unfolded before them. The castle was of gold with a tower of silver, and it shone like a winter day after a storm.

The bird broke away and went straight to the tower, and the children went too.

"From here we shall see the world, Kate. Look . . . look there . . . oh, look!" said Ellis.

And with their own two pairs of eyes, and the many from the potatoes, they saw the world. They saw ships and towers and cities afar. They saw rainbows and woodlands and jungles and many people.

And then Kate laughed her very hardest, and said to her friend: "Look . . . look up there! Toyland!"



Toyland with all its toys! And there are birds there like mine that can sing, perhaps."

"No," said Ellis, "I think you've the only one in the world, Kate, and that's because it belongs to you. And now, Kate, I think perhaps we'd best go home."

And they did. And they sat by the potato bin, and they looked at each other, and they nodded their heads because they knew what they knew.

"We'll hide the bird in the potatoes, Kate, and keep it safe and away from harm. And just you and I will know how to go the wide world o'er . . . nobody else," said Ellis.

"Yes," said Kate. And she looked ashamed. "Ellis," she said, "Ellis, I've got something I just have to tell you. I . . . well, Ellis, you've been so nice to me, and you heard the song, and now I have just got to tell you something."

"Well, Kate, what is it?" asked the long-legged boy.

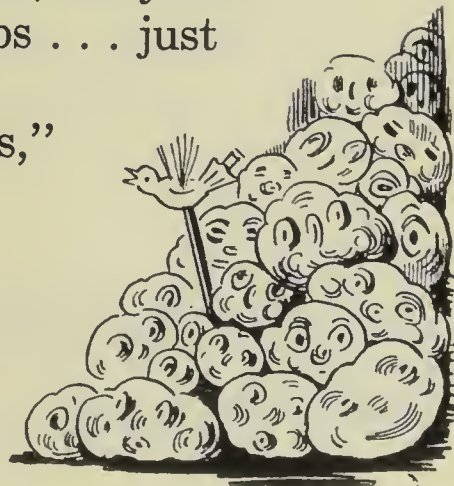
"Ellis, I . . . I call you Parlour Tongs . . . just to myself, mind you. Nobody knows. But to myself, I always call you Parlour Tongs. And I'm sorry, and . . ."

Ellis laughed merrily. "On account of my long legs, I suppose?" he said.

"Yes," said Kate.

"Well, don't you worry," said Ellis, "for, do you know what? I always call you Carrot Tops . . . just to myself, mind you. Nobody knows."

"On account of my red hair, I guess," laughed Kate.



"Yes," said Ellis. "And besides, I like Parlour Tongs for a name. Ellis is so dull."

And up the cellar steps ran the boy and the girl. Cassandra was sitting on the wood-horse.

"Hello, Cassandra," said the happy Kate.

"I'm not speaking to you, Kate," said Cassandra. "You called me a worm. And Ellis, I've been looking for you everywhere. Where have you been?"

"My name is Parlour Tongs, and I've been around the world."

He went through the fence.

"He heard the clay bird calling," said Kate, as she ran towards the house.

"Wait a minute. Wait!" called Cassandra. "Where are you going, Kate?"

"Home for doughboys. Can't you smell them?"

Kate disappeared through the kitchen door.

Cassandra found herself suddenly alone. "I . . . I wish I could hear the clay bird calling. I seem to be missing so much fun." Her face filled with determination. "I'll learn. Kate will show me how. I'm glad I know Kate."

You might have known Kate too, if you'd lived when the streets were cobble stones and when the horses wore straw hats in the so long, long ago.



LITTLE ANDY LITTLE

Little Andy Little lived near the waterfront. He liked the waterfront. So did Pete. Pete was his dog. Things happened at the waterfront. Boats came in. Boats went out. Whistles blew. Gulls screamed. And breakers brought things to Andy and Pete.

Once a green bottle rolled in on the waves . . . a wonderful green bottle with a wee fish inside. Andy and Pete let the fish out to see the world, and the poor little thing turned over and died.

And once a doll — a water-soaked doll — came in on the waves. Andy didn't want a doll, of course, for Andy was a boy, but he dried its hair and he dried its tears, and Pete took it to the little girl who lived at the light-house down on the point.

And to-day there was blowing a terrific sea — just the kind of sea that brought things to Andy. The whitecaps were riding astride every wave. The sea castle Andy and Pete had just built was licked up and carried out to the sea. The wind was pounding against Andy's strong, tough little face, and he laughed out loud, and Pete barked and barked.

"Bow, wow," said Pete.



"Bugs and beetles!" said Andy. "It's a lovely rough day . . . the nicest rough day we've had in weeks, isn't it, Pete?"

"Bow, wow," said Pete.

"It's nice just to be alive . . . eh, Pete?" said Andy.

"Bow, wow," answered his dog.

"It's a nice wind. It's a nice sea. Blow, you wind. Roll, you sea . . . roll, roll, roll."

And Andy Little broke into song:

"Oh, Mister Ocean, roll on, roll on!

Oh, Mister Ocean, roll!

Bring Pete and me something nice to-day.

Roll on, roll on, oh, roll!"

And Andy laughed out loud again, and Pete laughed too in the doggiest little way.

And then Pete stopped suddenly to bark: "Bow, wow, wow," he said excitedly, "wow!"

"What is it, Pete?" asked Andy. "What is it?"

Pete didn't answer, but he began to race madly up and down the waterfront, looking out to sea. "Bow, wow, wow!"

"What is it, Pete? What is it?" said Andy, running after him. "What is it? I don't see anything." And then he did see something. "Yes, I do! I see it too . . . riding the breakers! What is it, Pete? What is it?"

But Pete didn't know. He could only see, like Andy, something riding the crest of the waves —





something now short, now long. It was red. It was green. It was brown. What was it?

"Pete," cried Andy against the wind, "sick him!"

That seemed to be all the encouragement the little dog wanted, for he jumped into the roaring waters and swam desperately towards the mysterious bundle.

Andy was so excited he was dancing up and down as he watched Pete's struggle.

"That's it, Pete!" he cried. "Get it! Get it!"

Pete was getting it, but it was no easy job. Pete was having a rough time, but he didn't mind. Pete had fought with breakers before, and Pete liked a good scrap once in awhile.

"Get it, Pete! That's the dog!" called Andy again.

And after another few minutes of tossing about, Pete reached the bundle and swam for shore. Breathlessly he dumped it at Andy's feet.

Andy looked at it in wide-eyed wonder.

"Bugs and beetles, Pete! Look what you've brought. It . . . it's alive, Pete. It's a monkey, Pete, a little half-drowned monkey, with a red coat and a bit of chain on its ankle. Oh, bugs and beetles! And it's almost dead. What'll we do? What'll we do?"

That Pete didn't know. He had done his part. He had brought the monkey safely ashore. The rest was up to Andy, and whatever it was to be, it must be very soon, for the little monkey squealed faintly and shivered violently.



"He's cold, Pete. Of course he's cold . . . that's for sure," said Andy Little. "And we'll have to get him home right now . . . that's for sure, too."

You run ahead, Pete, and tell Mum we're coming."

And off ran the dog, barking with all his might.

Andy picked up the quivering monkey and stuffed him up under his blue wool jersey, and ran for home too. The warmth of Andy's stout young body revived the monkey, and the little fellow closed his eyes and softly slept.

Mrs. Little was making tea biscuits when her two beach-combers came into the kitchen.

"Mum, guess what . . . guess what!" cried Andy.

Pete barked in excitement.

"It's not hard to guess," laughed Mrs. Little. "It's a windy day. It's been a stormy night. The sea has brought you another gift. What is it this time — a sea horse, or an elephant?"

"You don't know how nearly right you are, Mum. Look . . . just look!" And Andy pulled up the blue wool jersey.

"A monkey! My land, it's a monkey!" said Mrs. Little. "What on earth . . . where on earth . . . well, what next?" And Mrs. Little wiped her hands on her apron and sat right down.

The monkey opened his weary eyes and smiled shyly up at Andy Little.

"Yes, it's a monkey . . . a real live little monkey, but it's almost dead 'cause it's so cold. Because do you know what? Monkeys don't belong in a windy sea. And he's ever so cute. And Pete saved his life. And he's got a red coat with green buttons on it, and a chain on his leg. And he likes Pete and me, and we like him. And he's Pete's and mine, isn't he, Mum? Or is he?"

Mother laughed again. "Well, first of all, before we decide who owns him, we'd better take this wet coat off him, and get him warm, or he'll die of pneumonia. Come, little monkey, let's make you comfortable."

But the monkey wouldn't go to Andy's mother. He whimpered in fright and threw his tiny arms about the neck of the little boy and would not let go. And his frightened eyes seemed to say: "Stand by, won't you? This is all so new and strange to me."

And Andy understood and stroked his trembling body and said to him: "Don't you be scared. I'll look out for you."

So it was Andy who took the wet coat from the monkey. He threw it to Pete, who carried it to Andy's laughing mother. And it was she who found out who the monkey really was.

"Well, look at this!"

Embroidered in bright yellow inside the neck of the little coat were the words:

JOCKO
PIRUCELLO'S SHOW



"Jocko's his name, eh, Mum? It's a nice name, isn't it, Pete?" said Andy.

"Bow, wow," said Pete.

"But what does *Pirucello's Show* mean, Mum?"

"It means Jocko is a circus monkey. It means he belongs to a travelling show. It means we'll have to find out where Pirucello's show is going, and send Jocko on to wherever it is."

"Oh, no, Mum!" cried Andy Little. "No! Jocko's mine . . . mine and Pete's. The sea gave him to us. He belongs to the sea, just like the waves and the shells and the fishes, and . . ."

"You know better, Andy," said his mother, looking at her little boy.

"Yes . . . yes, I do. But, Mum, let's not hurry finding the show. Let's wait maybe a day . . . or two." Andy saw the look in his mother's eyes. "Oh, well, all right!"

That night they saw an advertisement in the paper. Pirucello's Show was to be in town, not this Tuesday, but the next.

"We can wait till they come, eh, Mummy?" said Andy. "Please, eh?"

But Mother wouldn't wait. She wrote a letter, and she got an answer the very next day.

It seemed that Jocko had been chained to the leg of a chair on the deck of a boat when a storm came up. Jocko had become frightened, had broken the chain, and had been swept overboard into the sea. His master was certain that Jocko had been drowned. He had never expected to see him again. But if the

kind lady would keep him until he reached town on Tuesday next, he would get his monkey and pay her for her trouble.

"You're no trouble, are you, Jocko? You're fun," said Andy.

The days flew by and were full of excitement for the three little friends — Pete, Jocko, and Andy Little. Jocko knew so many tricks. He'd dance to the music on the radio. He'd tip his little hat that he didn't have . . . he'd just let on. And he'd collect lots of pennies in a dipper of Mum's. He'd climb up trees and swing by his tail. He'd go for rides on Pete's furry back, and he'd sit by the waterfront and watch the sea.

And when he grew tired of showing off all his tricks, he'd go to Andy and wind his arms around Andy's neck and lick behind Andy's standy-out ear. And Andy'd laugh, and Pete would bark.

And Mum would shake her head and say: "Dear me, dear me! Tuesday's going to be a very sad day in the Little house, I'm afraid . . . a very sad day."

And Tuesday came, as Tuesdays will. It seemed as if the day were feeling sad too, for the rain was pouring in torrents all morning.

"I bet the sky knows, Pete," whispered Andy. "I bet the sky's crying 'cause Jocko is going home. But maybe, too, the sky's trying to help. Maybe it's trying to keep Mr. Pirucello home."

But if that was the reason for the rain, it didn't succeed, for at five minutes exactly before four



o'clock, the bell on the Littles' front door started ringing.

Pete cried: "Woo-oo-oo," and Andy Little swallowed hard and said to his dog: "Sh, sh, Pete! Don't do that. Jocko mustn't know. And anyway, Pete, Pirucello's his home, and he may be glad."

"Woo, woo," cried Pete, and that meant *no*.

And then Mum called Andy to come in.

Andy swallowed again and went into the hall.

"Andy, this is Mr. Pirucello," said Mum. "He's come for Jocko."

"Yes," said Andy. "He's a nice monkey, sir. I . . . I love him, and so does Pete."

"Everybody likes Jocko, I guess," smiled the circus man. "He's a very lucky monkey to have been saved by so nice a boy and so nice a dog. I thought he was gone for good. I thought he was drowned. I was feeling pretty bad, and then along came your letter. Where is he now? Jocko! Jocko!"

Jocko came scampering down the hall. He looked at his master, and ran around in circles.

The man snapped his fingers.

"Hi, fellow, how are you? Glad to see you again. Come on . . . up! That's the good monkey!"

Jocko whimpered and sat down suddenly and cried unhappily into his little hands. Then he sprang to Andy Little's shoulder and wound his wee arms tightly about Andy's neck, as if to say: "No, no, you won't let me go. Please don't let me go."

"I can't help it, Jocko," said Andy bravely. "Neither can Pete. We . . . we've had fun, and . . .

and . . . well, we're thankful to the sea for bringing you in. And now, good-bye."

And Andy Little, tight-lipped, ran from the room, after placing Jocko in the circus man's arms.

And Tuesdays came, and Tuesdays went. There was not so much laughing in the Little home. The boy and his dog played in the yard. They just couldn't go to the waterfront.

Mother shook her head as the days went by.

"Maybe to-morrow," she'd say, "maybe to-morrow they'll have forgotten him."

And over on the circus grounds, far from the waterfront, a circus man shook his head too, and said: "Maybe by to-morrow he'll forget about them . . . maybe by to-morrow. He's a very sad monkey these days. What's the matter with you, Jocko? Don't you like the circus any more? You're not funny these days. You're not making the people laugh. Do you want to go to the boy and the dog down at the waterfront?"

Jocko whimpered a feeble "Yes."

"Then there's no use keeping you around here, Jocko. A monkey with a broken heart's no good in the circus. And besides, I wouldn't make you miserable for all the circuses in the world."

So into a box he put the little monkey, and marked the box:

ANDY LITTLE AND HIS LITTLE DOG

Tuesday came again, as Tuesdays do, and the door-bell rang, as door-bells do.



"It's the express man," said Mrs. Little.

"It's Jocko! It's Jocko!" cried Andy Little.

"Bow, wow," barked Pete.

"Well, all's well that ends well," smiled Mother Little, as she mixed her biscuits.

She looked out of the window towards the waterfront. She could see the three friends. They were standing together watching the waves. They liked the waterfront. Things happened there. Boats came in. Boats went out. Whistles blew. And Andy Little sang:

"Oh, Mister Ocean, roll on, roll on!

Roll on, roll on! We're glad.

Jocko is home now with Pete and me.

We're glad! We're glad! We're glad!"



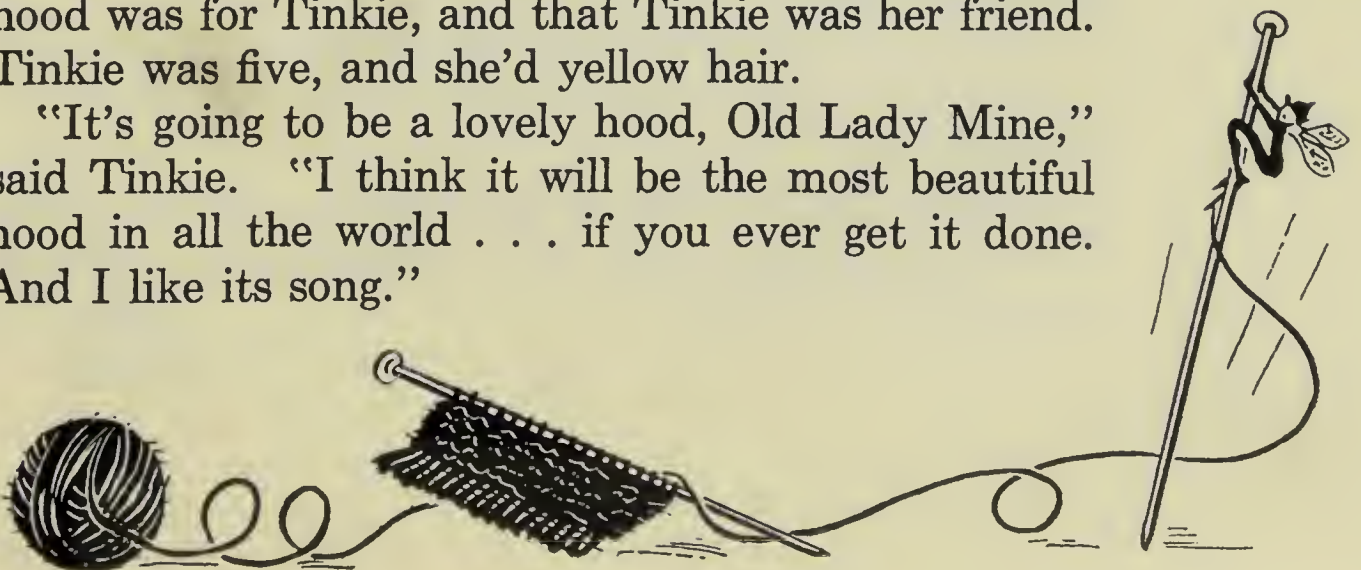


The Magic Hood

In the not-so-long ago, just ten minutes and ten seconds before the fairy tower told tea-time to the turtle doves, an old, old lady found a song on her lips. She liked the song, and she hummed it softly in time with her clicking needles. And she wove her song into the wool of the red hood she was making, and it lay there, fairy-like, for evermore.

But she didn't know it was a fairy song that she had been singing, and she didn't know the magic she had spun with her singing. She only knew that the hood was for Tinkie, and that Tinkie was her friend. Tinkie was five, and she'd yellow hair.

"It's going to be a lovely hood, Old Lady Mine," said Tinkie. "I think it will be the most beautiful hood in all the world . . . if you ever get it done. And I like its song."





The old lady laughed. She'd been laughing for many years . . . you know how old ladies do. And she'd known children for many years . . . perhaps she even knows you. But she'd never before made a song.

"Sing it again, Old Lady Mine. I'd like to learn it," said Tinkie, who was five.

*"Little, little fairy, from the rainbow shore,
You're hiding in the red hood; you'll be there evermore.
On days that Tinkie wears it, the fairy folk will come
And tinkle in the red hood, and Tinkie will have fun."*

"Oh! Oh!" said Tinkie. "Oh, it's a nice song! Hurry, hurry, Old Lady Mine. Finish the bonnet quickly, please."

And the little girl went hopping away on one foot, singing: "On days that Tinkie wears it, Tinkie will have fun."

Every day, ten times over, Tinkie tapped on the old, old lady's door. She wished she could go through the keyhole.

"Some day I *will* go through the keyhole," she said, as she waited for her answer.

"Not yet, Tinkie," the old, old lady would call from inside, "but soon."

And then came the day that the red hood was finished. It was truly beautiful. It had rosettes. It had ribbons. It even had a red silken lining. Tinkie loved the red hood so much that she could only smile her thanks.

"You are very welcome, Tinkie . . . very, very welcome, my dear," smiled little Old Lady Mine. "It was fun making it for you. And you were so patient . . . you never came to the door more than eleven times any day."

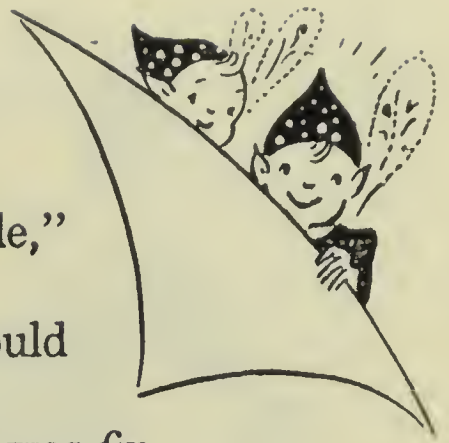
"I *am* good that way," said Tinkie.

And putting on the red hood, she went hopping off down the street on one foot, and she sang the song as she hopped:

*"Little, little fairy, from the rainbow shore,
You're hiding in the red hood; you'll be there evermore.
On days that Tinkie wears it, the fairy folk will come
And tinkle in the red hood, and Tinkie will have fun."*

"Ha, ha," laughed the happy Tinkie. "Wouldn't it be funny if the fairy folk did come? Wouldn't it be funny if the little old, old lady's song was really true?"

"You needn't laugh," said someone from her hood. "It is really, and it is truly." And Tinkie felt someone tug at a yellow curl.





She ran to a shop window and looked in at herself. Yes, there *was* something in the new hood. She could see it. Peeking out from the point of it was a little, little fairy, and he wore a suit of green.

"Oh!" gasped Tinkie. "Oh!" And then, "Hello," she said.

The small one tipped his hat. She could see him in the glass. He swung to and fro like a tassel.

"Ouch!" said Tinkie. "You're caught in my hair."

"I beg your pardon," and he slid down the curl and sat on her shoulder.

She looked at him in such wide surprise that he laughed as loudly as a fairy *can* laugh. (But that's not very loud, as *you* well know.)

"You're surprised, Tinkie, aren't you?" he asked. "You didn't ever believe it could come true, did you? You didn't even think you'd a magic hood, did you?"

"Well, no . . . no, I didn't," said Tinkie. "To tell the truth, Mr. . . . Mr. . . . what is your name?"

"Call me Flick," said the wee one in the hood.

"That's a nice name . . . Flick. No, I didn't know it was a magic hood. Little Old Lady Mine . . . does she know it's magic?"

"No, she doesn't. She didn't even know she was making it," said Flick.

"Making what?"

"Making magic with her song. You see, she made her singing at exactly ten minutes and ten

seconds before the fairy tower told tea-time to the turtle dove."

"Oh!"

"And when anyone makes singing ten minutes and ten seconds before the fairy tower tells tea-time to the turtle dove, he makes magic."

"Oh, a magic hood! But where do you stay in it, Flick? Are you in the lining . . . in the rosette?"

"No, I'm in the song. When you sing the song, I will come to you. And then we'll play whatever you want to play. We'll go wherever you want to go. We'll do whatever you want to do."

Tinkie laughed in glee. "I want to go through the keyhole in Old Lady Mine's big white door. I've always wanted to go through that keyhole. May we?"

"No sooner said than done."

And through the keyhole they went.

"Lack-a-day and a silver thimble!" gasped the little old, old lady. "I thought you'd gone home. My door is shut, and my key's in my pocket. I most believe you came through the keyhole."

"We did," said Tinkie.

"We? But I see only one."

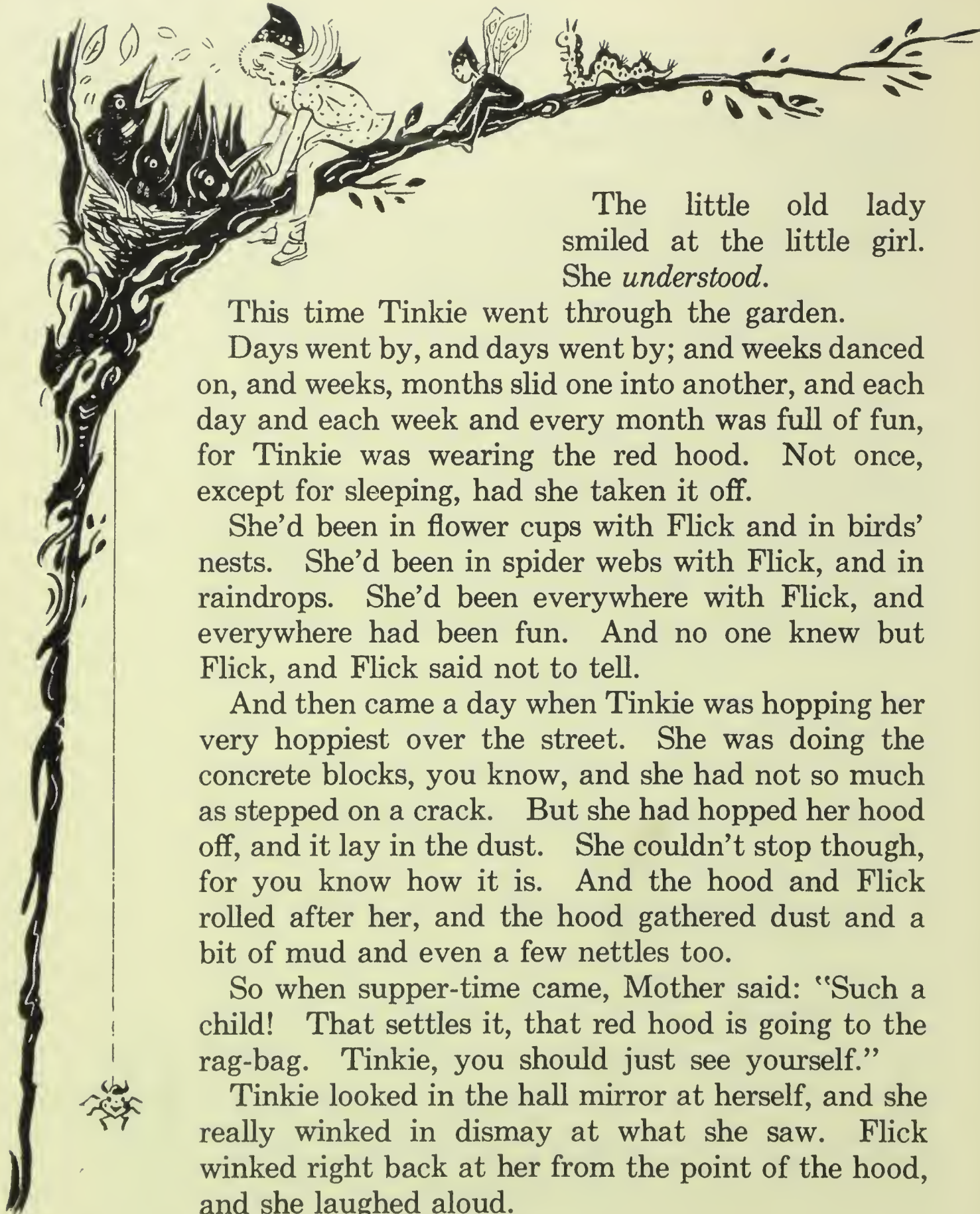
"There's Flick."

"Flick?"

"Sh, sh, say no more," whispered Flick in her ear.

"Oh," said Tinkie, "ah . . . Flick's my friend. He . . . he gets in my hair sometimes. He . . . he . . . likes my bonnet. I like my bonnet, and I must go home to show it to Mother. It's a magic hood, Old Lady Mine, but you didn't know it."





The little old lady
smiled at the little girl.
She *understood*.

This time Tinkie went through the garden.

Days went by, and days went by; and weeks danced on, and weeks, months slid one into another, and each day and each week and every month was full of fun, for Tinkie was wearing the red hood. Not once, except for sleeping, had she taken it off.

She'd been in flower cups with Flick and in birds' nests. She'd been in spider webs with Flick, and in raindrops. She'd been everywhere with Flick, and everywhere had been fun. And no one knew but Flick, and Flick said not to tell.

And then came a day when Tinkie was hopping her very hoppiest over the street. She was doing the concrete blocks, you know, and she had not so much as stepped on a crack. But she had hopped her hood off, and it lay in the dust. She couldn't stop though, for you know how it is. And the hood and Flick rolled after her, and the hood gathered dust and a bit of mud and even a few nettles too.

So when supper-time came, Mother said: "Such a child! That settles it, that red hood is going to the rag-bag. Tinkie, you should just see yourself."

Tinkie looked in the hall mirror at herself, and she really winked in dismay at what she saw. Flick winked right back at her from the point of the hood, and she laughed aloud.

"You needn't laugh, missy," said Mother, who was smiling herself. "I'm ashamed of you in that red hood. Now, don't you really think it's ready for the rag-bag?"

"No, no, Mum, I don't. I'll . . . I'll brush my hood, and I'll clean it and make it as good as new. I can't throw it away. I . . . I just can't."

"Why can't you?"

"Well . . . well . . . the little old lady . . . it would break her heart."

"Oh, no, it wouldn't! The little old lady wouldn't want to see my little old baby going around this way. Off to the rag-bag goes the hood!"

"No, no, Mum, no! There's Flick. I can't put Flick in the rag-bag."

"And who is Flick?"

"Sh, sh," whispered a voice in her ear.

Tinkie said no more.

"Well, anyway, I'm having some new hoods sent up from one of the shops to-day," Mother said, "and . . . and . . ."

"But I may keep my red one, please, Mum. I've just *got* to keep my red one. Please, *please* don't put it in the rag-bag."

"All right," said Mother.

And so the days went on, full of fairies and brownies and exciting things, full of songs and flowers and beautiful things, and trips to the moon and trips to the stars. And the hood got worse and worse for wear. A rosette was gone and then a ribbon, and soon the lining began to fray.

And then one morning before Tinkie came awake, Mother gave the red hood to a rummage sale.

"You didn't! You didn't! Oh, Mummy, you didn't! Oh, Flick . . . oh, Flick . . . oh, Flick, what shall I do?" Tinkie cried long and unceasingly.

"Tinkie, Tinkie, stop it!" said Mother.

"Oh, Mummy! Oh, Mummy, it's Flick! You didn't know, Mummy. But whatever will Flick do at a rummage sale?"

"I'm very, very sorry, Tinkie," said Mother. "I didn't realize how much you loved your red hood. But still, I don't see why . . ."

"'Cause . . . 'cause . . . it was a magic hood, Mummy," said the sobbing child.

"Magic?" said Mother, in surprise.

"Yes, and Flick lived inside. The little old lady sang him there. But I'll find him. Yes, I'll find you, Flick . . . somewhere . . . somehow! I've got to find him, Mum," said Tinkie.

Mother saw the loneliness in her little girl's face. She knew what it was to lose a friend, so she began to plan for Flick's return.

"We might trace him to the rummage sale, Tinkie. We'll go there."

Hats! Coats! Shoes! Dishes! Kettles! Books!

"We're looking for a red hood," said Tinkie's mother. "We sent it by mistake."

"We've no red hoods left," said the lady in charge. "There was one—old and battered, with one rosette and a torn string . . ."

"That's it," said Tinkie.

"We gave that hood away," said the lady in charge. "We gave it to a little brown girl, with buttoned boots."

"It's no use, Tinkie," and Mother took her home.

Days went by, and weeks. Months slid one into another, with Tinkie always watching for red hoods and buttoned boots. Then, when it seemed that all hope was gone, she sat one day on the front step just twiddling her thumbs, and of a sudden, a small brown dog came around the corner on three legs. He had something in his mouth. It was a red hood!

The little brown dog ran straight to Tinkie and laid the hood at her feet, as much as to say: "There, take it quickly! It's yours."

"*My hood!*" squealed Tinkie. "*My magic hood!*" And she sang:

"Little, little fairy, from the rainbow shore.

You're hiding in the red hood; you'll be there evermore.

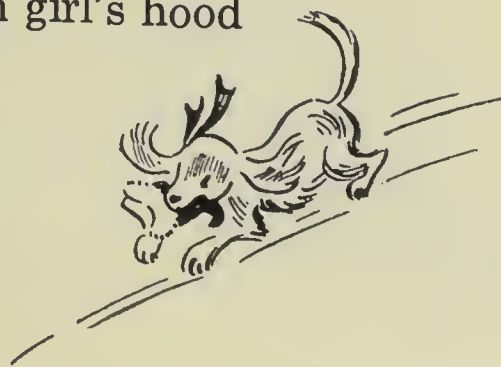
On days that Tinkie wears it, the fairy folk will come
And tinkle in the red hood, and Tinkie will have fun."

Flick peeked from the peak of the hood. He rubbed his sleepy eyes. He had been idle for days, weeks, months. The brown child knew not of magic, and Flick had been asleep.

Now the brown child came running around the corner.

"My hood! That's my hood," she said. "The little brown dog ran off with it."

Tinkie gasped. It *was* the little brown girl's hood now, wasn't it?



"Oh! I'll trade yours for mine," she said.

The little brown girl was very glad.

"Why, I'd like your blue bonnet," she said.

So she traded with Tinkie and went her way.

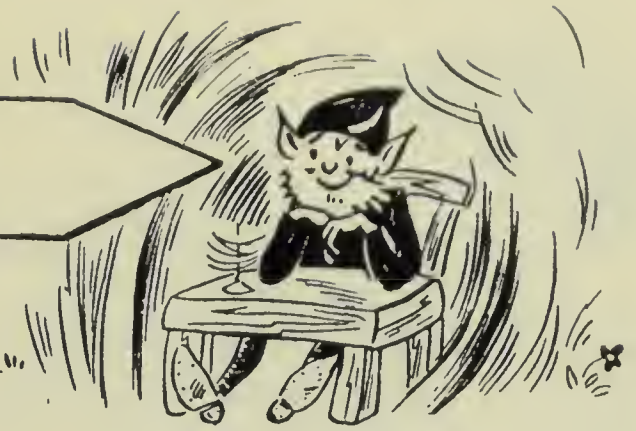
"Oh, Flick, Flick," said Tinkie, "I've been so lonely! But I've found you again. We must go first to the little old, old lady. She's been worrying all this while."

And, yes, you're right. They went through the keyhole of her big white door.

They found her humming. Perhaps 'twas another magic tune she sang. Who knows?



TRADE-INS



Once when it was a shiny night, when the moon fell over all the world, and when the little stars twinkled, a puppy dog sat still on the silvery highway and stared at the sky. And no matter how hard the moon shone, or how hard the stars twinkled, not even the tiniest wag could be found in the little dog's tail.

Not many folks were abroad that night. The throat of the robin was stilled with sleep. The song sparrow dreamed of happy to-morrows. Even the pigeons dozed in the church steeple. And a puppy tear splashed on the highway, and its stilly noise woke a restless toad.

"What's the matter, puppy dog? What are you doing out at this time of night? Why don't you go home?" he asked.

"I have no home," said the puppy dog.

"No home?" said the toad.

"No home," said the puppy.

"I don't believe you," said the toad. "I don't believe you. I saw you playing in yonder woodland only yesterday with a little boy. And he has a home, for he went to it when he was tired of play."

"Yes," said the little dog.





"Then go to him, and go to bed," said the toad.
"I can't. I've . . . I've left him. He . . . he doesn't want me any more."

"What a silly little dog this is, to be sure!" thought the toad. "As if there were any little boy or girl alive who didn't want a dog!"

And he said just that to the little dog, but the little dog answered sadly: "He wants a rabbit."

"Well, what of it?" said the toad. "What of it?"
"A white rabbit for Easter."

"You're jealous, aren't you?" said the toad.

"I am not," said the puppy dog. "I'm not jealous at all. But he hasn't spoken about me for days. It's just: 'I wish I had a rabbit, I wish I had a rabbit, I'd love to have a rabbit,' from morning till night. So I left home."

"Shame!" said the toad, "and another shame!"

And the puppy dog's ears dropped, and the puppy dog's tail sagged, and he let out a "woo-oo-oo-oo" to the moon.

"Oh, my green grandmother!" said Frankie Frog, waking from his slumbers. "There's a dog crying. Why isn't he home in bed?"

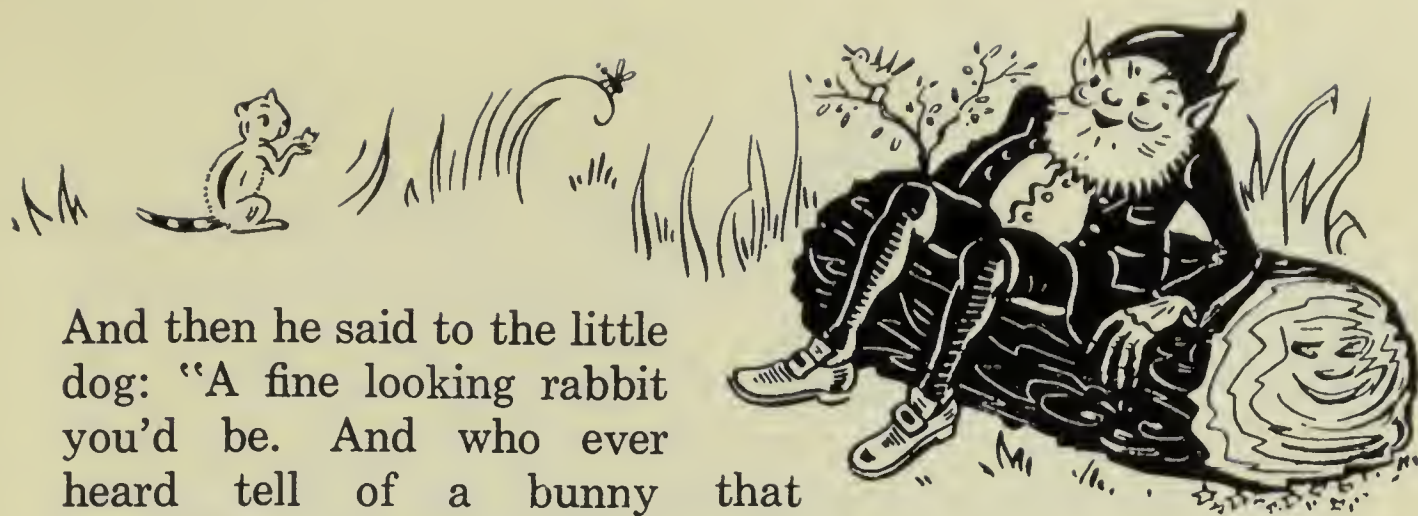
Another tear splashed on the highway, and the frog looked at the toad.

"He's jealous," said the toad, "jealous of the rabbits."

"I am not, I tell you," said the puppy. "I just wish I were a rabbit, that's all."

And the frog began to laugh, and he laughed until the whole swamp bubbled over with his merriment.





And then he said to the little dog: "A fine looking rabbit you'd be. And who ever heard tell of a bunny that barked?" Frankie laughed again.

"Frankie," said the toad, as he saw the hurt in the little dog's face. "Frankie, you go back to sleep. Never mind, puppy dog, I know how it is."

"Oh, do you, Mr. Toad?" said the little dog. "If even I had rabbit's ears, I wouldn't mind so much."

"Rabbit's ears, eh?" said Frankie, as he settled down to sleep. "Rabbit's ears? Well, let me tell you this, puppy dog, you'll never get anything by sitting on the roadside crying for it. When you want anything, you have to go after it."

And Frankie turned over and went to sleep.

The puppy looked at Mr. Toad.

"Yes, he's right," said that gentleman. "Rabbit's ears won't grow just because you cry to the moon."

"Well, is there any way I could get rabbit's ears? What did he mean, if I went after them; do you know, Mr. Toad?" said the little dog hopefully.

"There's the little Old Man of the Wood, you know," said the toad.

"I didn't know," said the puppy. "Who is he?"

"Who he is or where he came from, I do not know. I only know that he's thousands of years old and that he trades things," said the toad.

"Trades things?" said the little dog.

"Yes," said the toad. "You go to him. Tell him what you want, and no matter what it is, he'll trade with you."

"But I've nothing to trade," said the puppy dog.

"Well, if you want what you want very bad, he'll get what he wants. Now I'm tired, little dog, and I want to go to bed. But I'll tell you where to find him before I go," said the toad. "You go three pine trees to the right, up two silver brooks to the left, down a grassy knoll and over, and you'll see the little Old Man of the Wood. He'll be singing. He's always singing."

"Thank you," said the puppy dog, and with his ears up again and his tail unsagged, he ran off in the path of the moon.

Soon he heard the sound of singing, just as Mr. Toad had said he would. And soon he saw the little Old Man of the Wood, with a face as wrinkled as your bed clothes are when you wake in the morning. The little Old Man of the Wood sat on a little old hollow log.

The puppy dog could hear:

*"I am the Old Man of the Wood.
I'm never bad, I'm always good.
I come to everybody's aid,
And all I do is trade, trade, trade."*

"Well, what do you want for some rabbit's ears?" asked the little dog.

"What?" said the little Old Man of the Wood, falling backwards into a berry bush. "My whiskers

and green stockings, but you took a lift out of me! In fact, you've put me in the berry bush. Here, come, help me out."



And the little dog did.

"Now, what do you want?" said the little Old Man of the Wood.

"Rabbit's ears," said the little dog.

"But you've got two good dog ears. What more do you want?" said the little old man.

"I want to look like a rabbit," said the puppy. "My little boy wants a rabbit. He'd sooner have a rabbit than a dog."

"My whiskers and green stockings!" said the old man again. "What a queer boy he must be! Well, I'll trade you rabbit's ears and a white sugar coat for . . . for a pair of roller skates," and again he broke into song:

*"I am the Old Man of the Wood.
I'm never bad, I'm always good.
I come to everybody's aid,
And all I do is trade, trade, trade."*

No roller skates, no rabbit's ears."

"But my little boy has only one pair of skates, and they're brand new," said the puppy.

"The newer the skates, the longer your ears," said the old man.

"Oh! Oh!" said the little dog. "But what do you want roller skates for?"

"To skate on, silly," said the old man. "What does your little boy want them for? To stand on his head?"

"Sometimes he does. But he's young, and . . ."

"And I'm old, eh?" said the little Old Man of the Wood. "Yes, but that doesn't hurt me. When I want roller skates, I want roller skates."

"Well . . . all right," said the little dog, and away he ran home.

He hated to do this to Jimmy, but he had to. Jimmy wanted a rabbit, didn't he? Wanted a rabbit more than he wanted a dog?

Up the back porch steps the puppy stole. Into the shed he tiptoed.

A little gray mouse scampered into her hole in fright. But she needn't have. The little dog didn't even so much as see her. He was too busy thinking. There were the skates hanging in their usual place on their leather straps. It would be quite a job to get them down, but get them down he must.

He climbed to the table, then to the window-sill; and somehow he managed to get those skates to the floor. They clattered in the stillness of the night.

Taking them between his strong white teeth, he ran madly back to the little Old Man of the Wood.

The little old man was still swinging and singing:

*"I am the Old Man of the Wood.
I'm never bad, I'm always good.
I come to everybody's aid,
And all I do is trade, trade, trade."*

"Hello," he said, "so you've got them, eh? Well, the rabbit's ears are yours."

And diving into a hollow log, he came out with the finest, longest, whitest, pink-lined rabbit's ears that the little dog had ever seen. He snapped them into place and straightway began to slap sugar paint over the little dog's coarse black hair.

"My whiskers and green stockings!" he laughed. "If you aren't the finest looking rabbit for a Scotty dog I've ever seen!"

And stepping into the roller skates, the little Old Man of the Wood rolled away, to be lost in the fading light of the moon.

The little dog turned once more towards home. He hopped. He had to hop . . . he couldn't run . . . his sugar coat was too tight for that. His new ears were heavy too. They flip-flopped, flip-flopped, like dying leaves on a windy night.

The little dog sat down on the back porch to wait for morning and Jimmy, and they both came together. Jimmy came for his skates, but when he saw his puppy, he could only laugh. And he laughed and laughed . . . more than Frankie Frog had ever laughed. And when he stopped long enough to get his breath

to laugh again, he called to his mother: "Mummy, come, quick!"

Mummy came running from the kitchen.

"What is it, Jimmy?" she said.

"My dog, Mummy! Look at him. He's all dressed up like a rabbit."



And Mummy looked, and Mummy understood, just as mothers always do.

"Jimmy," she said, "don't laugh at the puppy. He's done this for you. He thought you wanted a rabbit."

The little dog's eyes again filled with tears, and they fell on his sugar coat. It slowly melted away and fell in sweet lumps on the garden walk. Jimmy's eyes widened in wonder, and his laughing stopped.

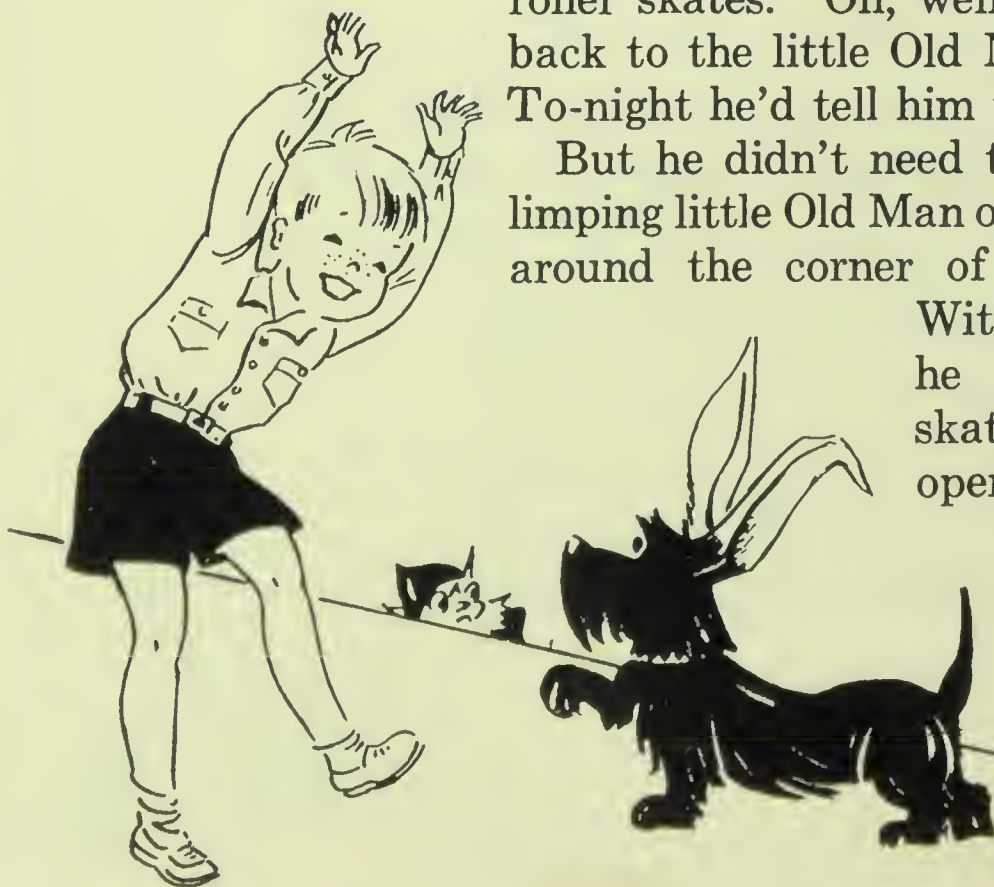
"But, Mummy, surely my very own little dog knows I love him best in all the world. Surely he knows I'd never change *him* for a rabbit."

Happiness once again crept into the heart of the little dog. Jimmy loved him, just for himself. How silly he had been, and how right Mr. Toad was! He didn't need these heavy rabbit's ears now. He didn't need to eat carrots all the rest of his life. He'd be happy always now.

And then he thought of the roller skates—the new roller skates. Oh, well, to-night he'd go back to the little Old Man of the Wood. To-night he'd tell him that . . .

But he didn't need to go. A bruised, limping little Old Man of the Wood peeked around the corner of the back porch.

With a disgusted snort he threw the roller skates through the open window, and they landed neatly on their own nail.



"I nearly killed myself, I did . . . nearly killed myself."

And he turned towards the forest, singing:

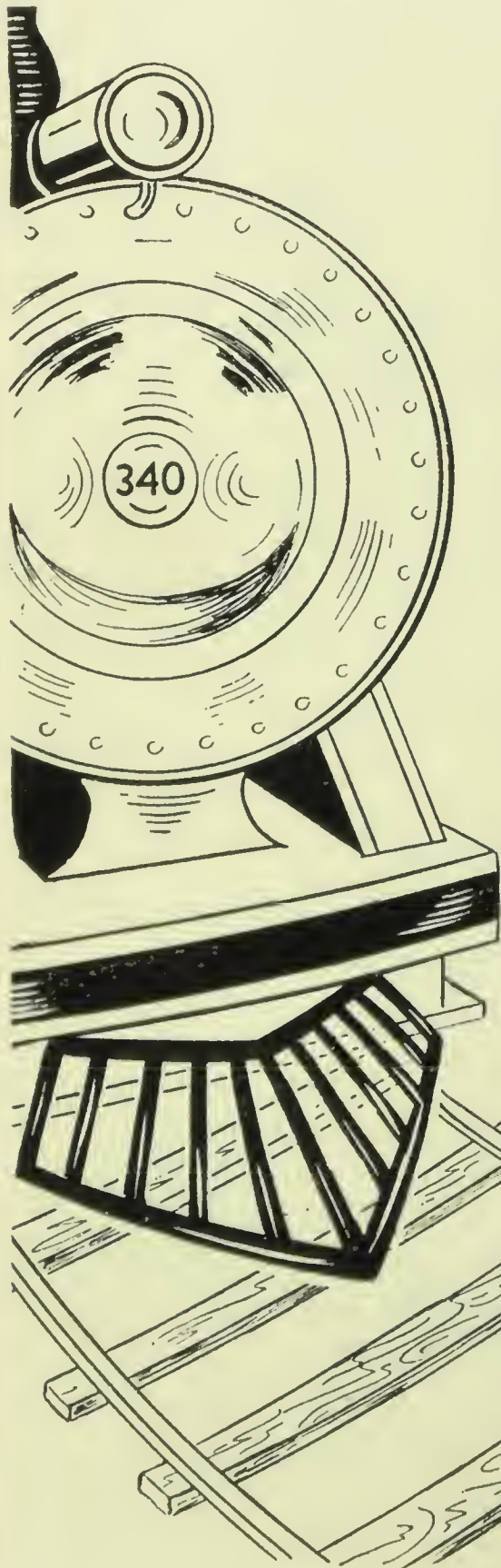
*"I am the Old Man of the Wood.
I'm never bad, I'm always good.
If you would trade, for pity sake,
Don't bring me any roller skates!"*

For the first time in days, the little dog laughed.

And because it was a shiny night, and because the moon shone over all the world, it happened. Had it been dark, I doubt it would ever have happened at all.



THREE FORTY



If anyone other than Kitty McCool had told me this, I'd have said 'twas a dream. But I couldn't say that to Kitty McCool, for there never was a child more wide awake. Her brown eyes were sparkling just with seeing things and seeing people.

"And anyway," she said, and very true too, "why should anyone dream in a railway station? It's the widiest, awakiest place in the world."

"But even so, Kitty McCool," I said, "even so, I still don't quite believe that that steam engine spoke to you."

"But I tell you he did. He knows me, you know. He's seen me playing down by the green. He goes by there every day at the same time. I call him *Three Forty*, for that's when he goes. I know the man who sits up in the seat, and I wave at him, and he always waves back. But

when *Three Forty* spoke, I was so surprised. I

was sitting on a trunk with my bag and my kitten when Three Forty said loudly enough for the whole world to hear: 'Hello, Kitty, Kitty, Kitty, Kitty . . . Kitty . . . Kitty . . . Kitty . . . Kit . . . ty . . . Kit . . . ty . . . Kit . . . ty . . . Kit . . . ty.'

"I laughed. I laughed so loudly that I fell off the trunk. But I guess Three Forty wanted no one to know that he was speaking except just to me, for he said: 'Sh . . . sh . . . sh . . . sh.' And I sh'd, for you know me when it comes to secrets," said Kitty McCool. "Why, I can keep a secret most all of a day, and sometimes I don't even tell it when bedtime comes. So I winked at Three Forty so he'd know I knew what he meant, and he began to run up and down the track, and he made the funniest noises.

"Then a man called: 'Boar-r-r-r-d!' And do you know what?" asked Kitty McCool.

And I didn't know what.

"Well," went on Kitty, "I boarded Three Forty and sat all by myself in a seat with my kitten. And all the way to my grandmother's house, Three Forty didn't forget that I was along, for he kept calling: 'Yoo-oo-oo-OO-OO-oo-oo-OO-OO-oo-oo-OO-OO . . .'

"At last I got to my grandmother's station," said Kitty, "and I had to get off with my bag and my kitten. And though you know how much I love my grandmother,"—and I said I did—"I felt very lonesome to leave Three Forty, and I sort of lingered a bit and smiled up at him. And then my grandmother said: 'Come, Kitty McCool, come along, my dear. Grand-daddy's waiting. Don't you want to see him?'



" 'Oh, yes,' I said, 'but please excuse me a minute. I want to say good-bye to someone.'

"So I ran down the platform to where Three Forty was standing, all puffy and huffy from his long, hard run, and I said good-bye. And would you believe it? Three Forty cried. And he sobbed, and he sobbed: 'Ah . . . ah . . . ah . . . ah . . . ' He was just so lonesome to see me go.

" 'Don't cry, Three Forty,' I said to him. 'Don't you cry, because my grandmother's farm is just across the road, and every day at this time, Three Forty, do you know what I'll do? I'll come down to the station to see you come in. And you can tell me the news along the line, and I can tell you all about me and my kitten.'

"And Three Forty seemed to be very glad, for he laughed: 'Ha-ha-ha-ha . . . ha-ha-ha-ha.' And away he went down the track, laughing all the while.

" 'Come, Kitty, come,' my grandmother called. 'I declare, I've never seen such a child for trains. You love them, don't you?'

" 'I love Three Forty. He's the one I love,' I said, 'for he speaks to me, and he laughs, and he cries, and we have such fun. Three Forty's my friend. He's very kind.'

"Grandmother smiled," said Kitty McCool, "but I didn't mind. My grandmother's old, and I knew that the trains didn't speak to her.

"It was nice at my grandmother's. She has chickens and pigs and petunias. And guess what she has in her living-room? Sliding doors!" said

Kitty McCool, "sliding doors that run on a little railway track, just like Three Forty does. Those doors were such fun, because all you had to do was to stand up close and put your cheek against the door and give it a shove, and away it would go—away down the track. And you could play it was Three Forty come to Grandma's for tea.

"My grandmother laughed and laughed when I told her that, and said you'd think that train was a person, the way I behaved. She didn't seem to understand that a train is a person, with a heart inside, who laughs and cries.

"Well, every day, just as I said I would, I went to the train. I found out a lot of things about Three Forty. He was very kind. One day he brought me a new dress from Mummy, and one day he brought me a tricycle from Daddy for my birthday. But one day he got into most awful disgrace. He killed Flossie Cow. I'll never forget that day as long as I live," said Kitty McCool.

"I went down to the station at the same old time, and found the whole platform lined with men. Most of them were just standing by, but two were talking. And one was my friend who drove Three Forty, and one was a farmer with an angry face.

" 'Yes, sir,' screamed the farmer. 'Yes, sir, nobody's cows have a chance when that three forty comes along. Why, it goes sixty miles a minute.'

"The driver laughed a little then because I guess that sounded pretty fast, and he said to the farmer: 'Oh, come now, sir, not quite *that* fast.'

" 'Well, mighty nearly, mighty nearly,' the farmer cried. 'Because my cows are fast steppers, and, sir, poor Flossie didn't have a chance. She was just tossed up into the air by that engine, and that was the last of her.' " And Kitty McCool sighed for Flossie.

And then she went on: "And the driver said that, after all, cows shouldn't be on the railway track.

" 'I've got to get them home to the barn for milking, haven't I?' said the farmer.

" 'Yes,' said the driver.

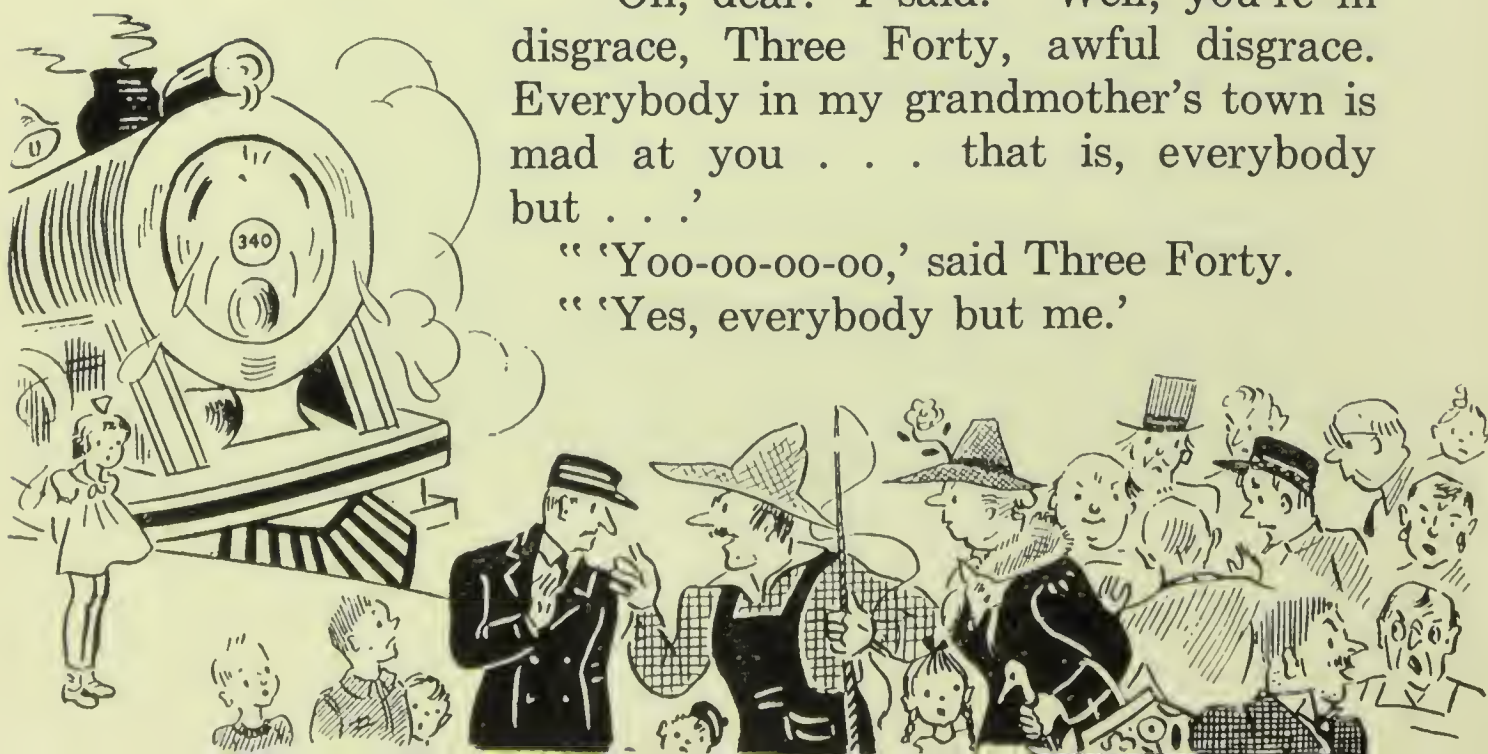
" 'And they've got to cross the track to get to the barn. I tell you, no other train but the three forty would do such a thing to my Flossie. And I'm going to report it, too. Yes, sir, I'm going to report it,' said the farmer.

"The driver felt sad as he walked away, and Three Forty sighed. Of course I didn't believe it was true," said Kitty McCool, "so I went to Three Forty, and I said to him: 'Three Forty, is it true that you killed Flossie?' And he answered: 'Yes-s-s-s-s-s-s.'

" 'Oh, dear!' I said. 'Well, you're in disgrace, Three Forty, awful disgrace. Everybody in my grandmother's town is mad at you . . . that is, everybody but . . . '

" 'Yoo-oo-oo-oo,' said Three Forty.

" 'Yes, everybody but me.'



"And I went home sadly, and Three Forty went on his way.

"I liked Flossie Cow, mind you, and I liked her milk, but I knew, too, that Three Forty hadn't intended to kill her. And anyway, she might have waited a little minute before she crossed the track. She needn't have crossed at that very time. She surely must have *heard* the train. And I told my grandma and grand-daddy, too, at dinner. And do you know what?" said Kitty McCool.

And again I said I didn't know what.

"They *blamed* Three Forty for killing Flossie. They *blamed* him. They said he was going much too fast. And I felt as if it was all my fault, for I knew he was hurrying just to see me. And now there was nothing I could do. Flossie was dead, and Three Forty was reported.

" 'Never you mind,' I said to them, 'just never you mind. Some day you may be glad that Three Forty goes fast. Some day you may be sorry you blamed him for something he didn't mean to do. Some day he'll be a big hero, maybe.' "

And Kitty McCool stopped her story then for a minute, and she rolled her eyes as if she were thinking very deeply. She was just remembering how good she felt when her words came true.

Three Forty did become a hero, you know, just as she said. It all happened the night of the big storm. The rain was falling as if it would never stop. I think old Mrs. Sky decided that night to dump all her buckets, to water every flower on the face of the

earth, to wash every pebble on every shore, to fill every stream and tiny pool, for the rain started that night at supper-time, and when Kitty McCool was going to bed, it was rolling down the roofs, and the gutters were roaring with their heavy loads.

"‘It’s a bad night,’ my grand-daddy said, ‘a bad night to be out. I never saw such rain. There’ll likely be washouts along the line.’

"‘I thought he meant petticoats and things hung out to dry, but he didn’t. He meant the water would wash out the rails on the railway track. And that wasn’t good,’ said Kitty McCool.

And I agreed, for I had seen a flood once when I was little. And I held my breath as she went on with her story.

"‘I’d been sleeping just twenty-three minutes, I think,’ she said, ‘when I heard my grandmum and grand-daddy down in the kitchen. They were excited. They were running here and there, and answering the telephone, and people were coming in and running out, and they were talking loudly, but no one was laughing. I didn’t know what was the matter. So I said to my kitten that we’d best get up and find out just what was going on.

"‘And then I heard the strangest sound for the middle of the night. It was: ‘Yoo-oo-oo-oo-oo . . . oo . . . oo . . . Kitty . . . Kitty . . . Kitty . . . Kitty . . . Kitty . . .’

"‘I ran to the window to look out.

"‘Three Forty! My very own Three Forty out on a night like this and running as he’d never run before,

and calling to me all the way:
'Kitty . . . Kitty . . . Kitty . . .
Yoo-oo-oo-oo . . . oo-oo . . .'

"Something was the matter. That was for sure. Three Forty was hours and hours early. He wasn't due until the afternoon. Something had happened.

"I ran downstairs, my kitten behind me," said Kitty McCool. "No one had time to talk to me, and I couldn't find out a thing.

" 'Go back to bed, Kitty. Go back to bed at once,' said my grandmum to me.

" 'But what's the matter? Please, won't you tell me?' I asked.

" 'Nothing . . . nothing's the matter at all,' said Grandmum.

"And do you know what?" And again I said I didn't know what. "Well, I stood right up," said Kitty McCool, "and I said to my grandmother: 'Please don't deceive me, Grandmother,' I said. 'I'm no baby. I know there's something the matter, for Three Forty's out. He just called to me. He was going fast, and he didn't stop.'

"And then they told me. There had been a bad accident down the line. The midnight train had gone off the track, and people were hurt and out in the wet. The roads were so muddy that cars couldn't get through, and they'd been calling the city from my grandmother's house, to tell Three Forty to come



a-running, for Three Forty was the fastest train on the road, even if he did kill Flossie Cow, when he didn't mean to.

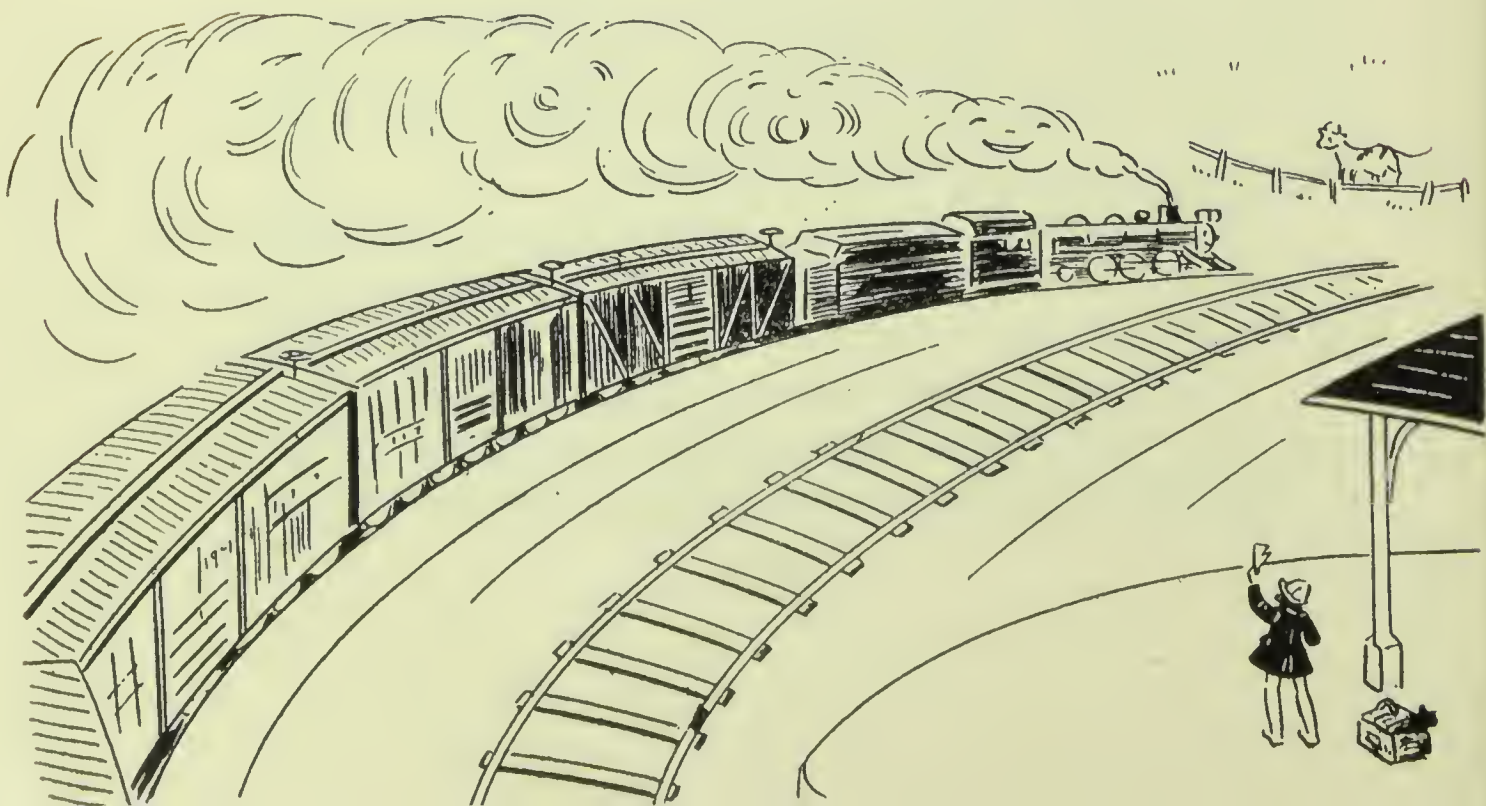
"We could hear Three Forty getting ready to go. And as soon as they had all the hurt people aboard, he started back to the city again. But he didn't forget. He called to me as he went by: 'Yoo-hoo-oo, Kitty, Kitty, Kitty.'

"And I just smiled and said: 'Good work, Three Forty! Hurry and get them all to the hospital in time.' And he did. Three Forty did.

"The next day the papers were full of him . . . telling that he'd been so fast, and he'd been so sure, and all the people were saved. And do you know what?"

"No, what?" I said to my little friend, Miss Kitty McCool.

"Even the farmer who'd lost Flossie Cow had to admit that Three Forty was a hero now. And I felt so good.



“And then came the day when I had to leave my grandmother’s house and go home. And again the man at the station called: ‘Boar-r-r-d!’ And I climbed up on Three Forty, and he took me home.

“He knew how I felt, and he was very glad, and we laughed with each other all the way home: ‘Ha-ha-ha-ha . . . ha-ha-ha-ha . . .’ ”

So that’s how it was. It all sounded so true, I just couldn’t say that it must be a dream, especially to someone like Kitty McCool.



The Little Green Lamb

I'm not asking you to believe this, mind you. All I know about it is what Jimmy told me, and you know Jimmy. He's the little red-head who lives at the corner in the blue-shuttered house beneath the big oak tree.

Jimmy has a way of finding adventure. Once he found a robin's nest in the cedar hedge, and the eggs were blue. Once he saw a star fall into the garden, and the next morning he found a flower there. But to find a lamb, a real live green lamb, in a yarn shop! Well, Jimmy says it's true, and you know Jimmy.

It all began in the meadow, of course,—the meadow over the hill and down by the stream. Little Larry Lambkin was talking with a song-sparrow.

"I was just thinking, Song-sparrow, that you do get around, don't you?"

"Oh, yes," said the song-sparrow. "I manage to get around."

"Are you going into the city to-day?" asked Larry.

"Of course! I wouldn't miss going into the city," said the sparrow. "I go in every day to see the styles and hear the news. They tell me that green is the favourite colour this fall. I was going to get a few green feathers for my tail, but I decided against it. Gray is much more dignified, don't you think?"

Larry Lambkin smiled.

"Oh, yes, much! I can't imagine a green song-sparrow any more than I can imagine a green lamb."

And they both laughed as they looked at Larry's thick white wool coat.

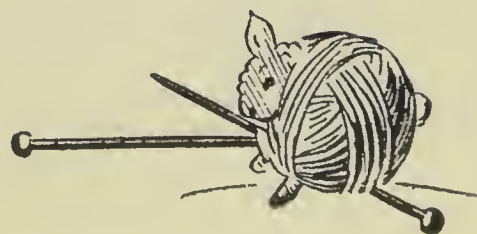
"And yet," said the song-sparrow, "come to think of it, why not a green lamb? They take your wool and make it into green yarn, so why *not* a green lamb?"

"That's right, too," said Larry. "People do wear woolly, coloured coats. They take my wool and make things and dress themselves up in it."

"Especially in the winter, they do," said the song-sparrow. "The shop windows are just full of wools now. Winter's coming, you know, and people like to be warm."

Larry looked thoughtfully up at the graying sky and sighed.

"Yes, it will soon be winter, and I won't be able to play in the meadow any more. The stream will



freeze up, and the daisies will die, and I shall be very dull. I wish I could go to a wool shop for the winter. It must be cozy on the shelves, and it would be fun to see all the styles, as you do."

"Why don't you go, then, Larry?" said the sparrow. "I bet you could go. I bet you could roll up into a tiny woolly ball if you wanted to."

"Oh, yes, I often curl up into a ball," said Larry.

"You could roll up so small that nobody'd guess it was you, and you could keep very still when anyone was looking. And they might put you into the window some time, and I'd come and sit on the sill and talk with you," said the sparrow.

"That would be fun," said the little lamb.

"Why don't you do it, then?" said the sparrow. "I know where there's the nicest yarn shop in town. I'll show you the way. And maybe somebody would come along and buy you."

"That would be fun too, much more fun than standing in a barn all winter." Larry was all excitement now. "But," he said, his voice dropping, "I'm not stylish. I'm not green."

The sparrow was thoughtful for a moment.

"I bet we can fix that too," he said. "Take a dip in the stream, and then roll in the grass. The grass will make you green. Come on! Come on!"

And that's what Jimmy's mother was saying to him back in the blue-shuttered house beneath the big oak tree: "Come on, Jimmy, come on!"

"You're going to match wool with my hair again, aren't you, Mum?" said Jimmy. "Good gracious

Hannah! don't a fellow's feelings make any difference ever to anybody? Listen, Mum, I don't care what colour of yarn you get for my new sweater just so long as it's not green, 'cause I'm sick and tired of hearing people say: 'Oh! doesn't Jimmy look adorable in green? It does go well with his red hair!' Red and green! You'd think I was a Christmas wreath or something. So I'm not going."

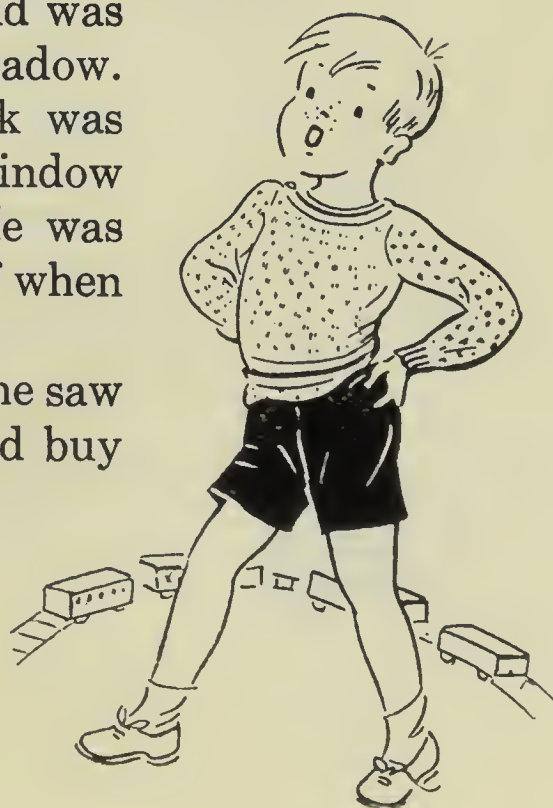
Mother looked at Jimmy in a way that only mothers can look.

"Oh, all right," he said. "I'll go. But mind you, I'm not going to be matched, and I'm not going to take green. I *hate* green."

Larry Lambkin would have felt very sad had he heard Jimmy saying that. Larry was now on the shelf in the wool shop, and don't ask me how he got there, for I don't know. I only know that he was there, for Jimmy told me. He was holding his breath too, for he was afraid he would roll off his perch and get killed on the floor.

He didn't like being in the wool shop nearly as much as he had thought he would, and was wishing that he were back in the meadow. His legs were cramped, and his neck was stiff, and he'd not once been in the window all day long, to see the sparrow. He was just beginning to feel sorry for himself when the door opened, and in came Jimmy.

Larry liked Jimmy the very minute he saw him, and he wished that Jimmy would buy him right straight away.



Larry's little woolly heart jumped joyfully when he heard the saleslady saying: "Why not green? Green would look adorable with Jimmy's red hair."

Jimmy bit his lip and clenched his small fists.

"No, not green," said Mother. "Jimmy hates green. It makes him look like a Christmas tree."

"Wreath," corrected Jimmy. "And I do hate green too. I'll take pink."

Mother and the saleslady laughed, but Larry Lambkin, in his great disappointment, cried out loud: "Baa-aa-aa."

"What's that?" gasped the saleslady, Jimmy, and Jimmy's mother.

"Baa-aa-aa," cried the green Larry again.

"My gracious! It sounds like a . . . sounds like a lamb," said the saleslady.

"It could be," said Mother. "Perhaps a baby lamb has fallen from a farmer's wagon on the way to market. Let's look."

"It sounds more as if it were right in this store," said the saleslady, but she went with Mother to the window to look.

"Baa-aa," said Larry softly this time, "baa-aa," and he looked down at Jimmy, and Jimmy looked up.

"Oh, my gracious Hannah!" said Jimmy, for Jimmy saw what his eyes found hard to believe—a little lamb, a real live little lamb, all rolled up in a ball on the top shelf! And it was *green*.

"Get me down," whispered Larry.





"Can't," said Jimmy. "Can't reach. Don't dare to climb. They'd catch on."

"Well, buy me," whispered Larry. "Buy me, please. I want to go back home."

"Good gracious Hannah! You're green." This was more exciting than blue eggs or falling stars. "Good gracious Hannah, yes!"

And turning towards the window, Jimmy said: "Let's get the yarn and go home, Mum. I want to play. You don't want to stay all day in a yarn shop, do you, Mum?"

So Mother began looking at the coloured balls.

"How about blue this time, Jimmy?"

"No, I don't like blue," said Jimmy, not taking his eyes off the green ball on the top shelf.

"Well, perhaps brown. Let's look at the brown," Mother said to the saleslady. "Brown wouldn't make my son look like a Christmas tree."

"Wreath," said Jimmy. "I don't like brown either, and I don't like yellow." Jimmy swallowed hard. "I'll take green."

"You'll what?" said Mother.

"I'll take green. I don't mind green," went on the excited little boy. "I don't mind being a Christmas tree once in a while."

"You mean *wreath*," said Mother.

"Yes, wreath. See that great big ball up there on the top shelf, Mum? I'll take it. I like it," said Jimmy.

Mother looked up at the green Larry Lambkin. He was very still. He didn't even blink an eye.

"I don't know," said Mother. "That's rather dark, don't you think?"

"That's grass green, madam," said the saleslady. "It's really a lovely shade. It looks like outdoors. It's so alive looking."

Larry winked at Jimmy.

"But you know you hate green, Jimmy," said Mother. "I don't want to be carrying home a lot of yarn, and the minute I get my needles out, have you change your mind about it."

Her needles! He'd have to hide those needles to-night. If he didn't, she'd have Larry made into a sweater before they knew it. He knew those needles of hers. They went like the wind.

"I won't change my mind, Mum. I like that wool up there. I'll climb up and get it, and I'll carry it for you."

And Jimmy climbed to the counter, reached for Larry, put him under his arm, and ran out of the shop.

Mother and the saleslady stared after him in wonder.

"Well, I guess that's settled," said Mother, as she paid for the green yarn and turned towards home.

Jimmy was nowhere in sight. He'd never run so hard in all his life, he told me. He had two things to do before Mother got home. He had to hide her knitting needles, and he had to talk to Larry.

"It was a funny thing to do anyway, Larry," said Jimmy, "a funny thing to leave a meadow and a stream and a blue sky to go into a store and sit on a shelf."

"But I'd never been on a shelf before, and I thought it would be fun," said Larry. "The sparrow thought so too."

"And you've never seen the sparrow all day long?"

"No, and if I don't get unrolled pretty soon, I don't know what I'll do," said Larry.

"We'll go into the garden and play. That'll be good for you," said Jimmy.

And they did. They played until they were both tired out.

The day was tired too, and began to close its weary eyes when Jimmy said: "You can sleep in Mum's basket, Larry. She won't knit you to-night, for I hid her needles in the book-case. She never reads on nights she has new yarn to work on."

Larry looked at Jimmy. "Well, that doesn't sound like very smart hiding, then, to me. If she doesn't read on nights she knits, and to-night she has no needles to knit with, well, she'll read. And she'll go to the book-case to get a book, and she'll find the needles; and before I know it, I'll be a sweater instead of a lamb. And anyway, I don't like sleeping in baskets. I like sleeping in meadows."

"But we haven't a meadow," said Jimmy.

"Can't you get one?" asked Larry.



"I don't know. I'll ask Dad, though."

And he did.

"It's to put my green sweater in, Daddy . . . I mean Larry. Oh, gracious Hannah, can't we have a bit of a meadow without so much talk?"

"I think we'd better have a bit of a bedtime by the sound of us," said Mother. "And, Jimmy, have you seen my knitting needles?"

"Yes, I saw them once. They were red, weren't they? But I wouldn't knit if I were you, Mum. I'd read instead if I were you. Oh, no! I mean, don't read. It'll blind your eyes to read, Mum. Mum, did you know I found a robin's nest once, and the eggs were blue. And, Daddy, once a star fell, and did you know I found a flower next morning?"

"And did you know I found my needles right in the book-case where Jimmy put them, and that I'm starting a *green* sweater right now?"

"Baa-aa-aa-aa," came from the yarn basket.

"What on earth is that?" said Daddy.

"It . . . it's little Bo Peep," said Jimmy. "She lost her sheep . . . I mean, it's one of little Bo Peep's sheep, I think. I heard it in the yarn shop to-day. I think I'd better take this yarn and go see Bo Peep. Mum, you can't knit Bo Peep . . . I mean, I have to go see a song-sparrow."

And catching up the green yarn in his arms, Jimmy ran out of the room, leaving his mother and father gasping in wonder.

The song-sparrow was in the lilac tree.

"I'll show him the way home, Jimmy," the sparrow said to the little boy. "It's all my fault anyway. He shouldn't have come."

"But I had fun," said Larry. "And I like Jimmy."

"But, good gracious Hannah, you don't want to be a sweater! It's bad enough for me to look like a Christmas wreath. Good-bye, and run! I'll see you in the meadow some time," said Jimmy.

"Yes," said Larry Lambkin.

Jimmy went back into the house.

"Mum," he said, "you've no yarn to knit. You might as well put your needles away. It's gone back to the meadow. That yarn was alive, Mum. That was really a little lamb, and his name was Larry."

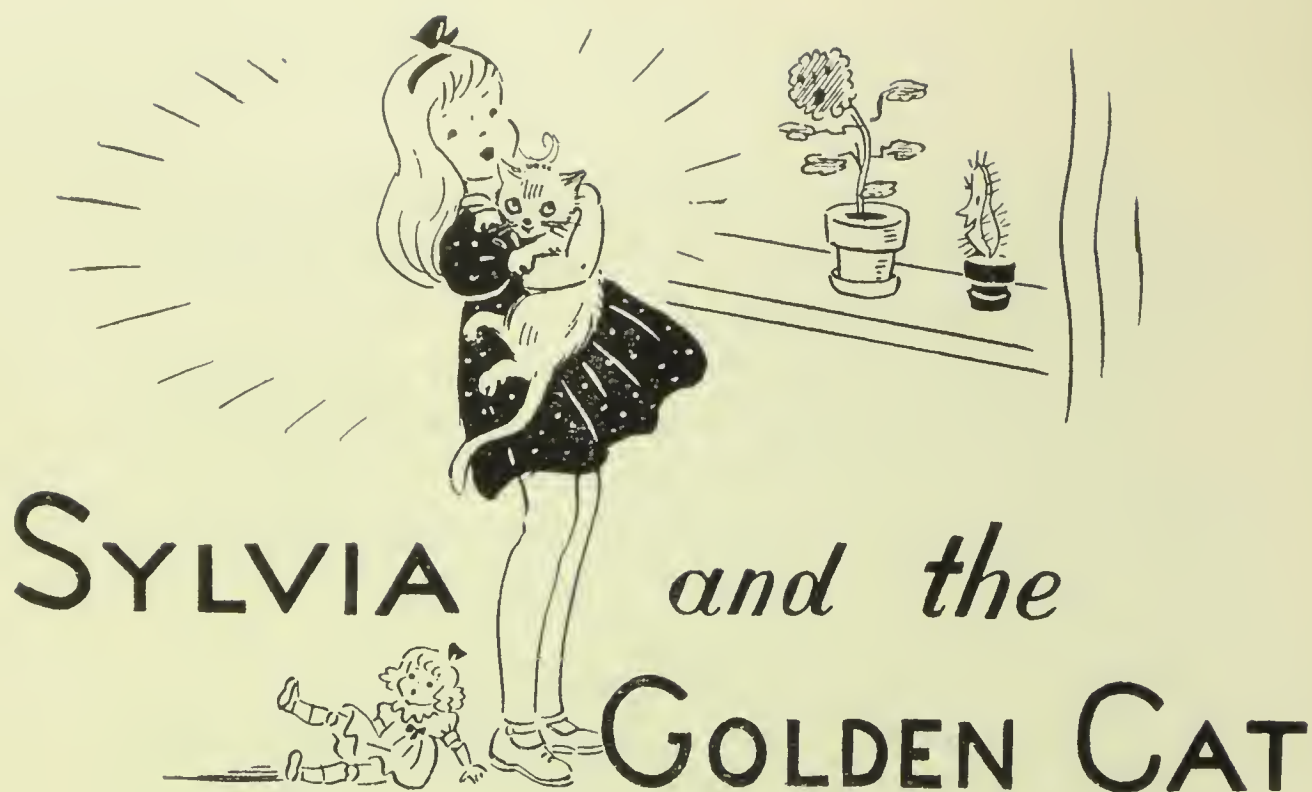
Mother laughed.

"But I've never seen a green lamb, Jimmy."

"He rolled in the grass. That's why he was green," said Jimmy. "The song-sparrow told him it would be fun, but he's taking a bath to-night. He'll be white to-morrow."

And Mummy believed, and I do too, but I'm not asking you to believe, mind you. I'm only telling you what Jimmy told me, and you know Jimmy. He's the little red-head who lives in the blue-shuttered house beneath the big oak tree.





This all happened a great while ago. Sylvia will tell you that herself. Sylvia's five now, and this happened when she was young.

Her daddy gave the cat to her. He got it from the butcher boy, who got it from the baker, who got it from the farmer's wife, who said she just didn't know where it came from, for she'd found it among her daffodils one day in June when the sun was shining.

I've never found out, nor has Sylvia, whether it was the daffodils or the sun's shining that made the cat a golden cat. We just know that the cat was golden.

Right from the first that cat was different. His eyes were green as the new spring grass. His tail was soft like a pussy-willow, and when he miewed, he almost sang.

Sylvia was delighted with the golden cat and laughed in glee when her daddy took him from his pocket.

"He's gold, Daddy,—pure gold," she said. "He looks as if he'd come from the land of dreams."

She didn't know how nearly right she was, for although that cat didn't come from the land of dreams, he often went to the land of fairies, where trees are silver, and cats are gold, where flowers are jewels, and snow's ice-cream.

"Land of dreams, indeed!" laughed Daddy to Sylvia. "Why, he's just an ordinary, everyday cat. I'd call him Skippy if he belonged to me. But of course he's not mine. He's yours—all yours—so you just call him whatever you like."

"Well, I'll call him Skippy for everyday, because you gave him to me, and you like that name, but his special, honest-to-goodness name is Golden, for somehow I think we'll have fun together."

Golden sang his mew and scampered away to play in the clover.

It was many days before anything unusual happened to Golden. He was just like any other cat. He played with the children, he chased the ball, he drank his milk, and he slept in his basket. But one morning, just at sun-up, when Sylvia was awake before her breakfast-time, she tiptoed out to Golden's basket, to find he was gone.

"Golden's gone," she said to the red geranium on the sill. "Golden's gone. He's gone away. And would you look?"

The geranium bowed her scarlet head and looked on the linoleum on the kitchen floor—tracks . . . tracks of gold dust, as true as true.



"Oh!" said the geranium. "Just what I thought. Golden has gone to Fairyland. That's the dust from fairy wings that you see all over the floor."

Sylvia sat right down plunk.

"Dust from fairy wings, right here in our kitchen? Golden gone to Fairyland, and he didn't tell me? Just wait till he comes home. Just wait. I'll . . . I'll . . . well, you just wait, and see what I'll do."

"I won't have to wait long," said the geranium, tossing her head in a scarlet smile, "for Golden is back. He's out there now. Listen!"

And Sylvia listened, and Sylvia heard: "Miew, miew, miew." It was coming from the clover.

Sylvia ran to the golden cat.

"All right for you, *Skippy*," she said, calling him by his everyday name, just like that. "All right for you! You ran off to Fairyland, and you didn't take me. I think you're mean. I took you to Sunday school, didn't I? I took you down cellar to see the mouse, didn't I? I took you over to the corner to hear the band, and I let you look in my new doll house, too. But you run off alone. All right for you, *Skippy*!"

"But I couldn't take you with me, Sylvia," said Golden. And his green eyes looked into her sparkling blue ones. "I couldn't take you with me to Fairyland, for you haven't got wings."

"I haven't got wings! Well, upon my word! I haven't got wings, and I suppose *you* have." And Sylvia looked contemptuously at her little cat.

"No, I haven't, but I've gold dust on my coat, and that's the same thing. I can get into Fairyland that way. Now, if you'd gold dust on your gown . . ."

Sylvia sat down plunk again, this time in the clover.

"I'll have to *get* gold dust for my gown. I'll just have to. Where do I get the gold dust, Golden?"

"I don't know, Sylvia," said the cat.

"You don't know?" said Sylvia. "But where did you get yours?"

"I don't know that . . . honest, I don't. I just seem to have it. Maybe I got it in the daffodils, but I don't know," said the little cat.

Sylvia kicked her heels in the clover and rolled her eyes to the blue, blue sky.

"Do you have fun in Fairyland, Skippy? What do you do?"

"Oh, I play with the fairies. I roll their hoops. I drink from their flower cups. I dance on the green. I even sing their songs. This is one of them:

I'm a little golden fairy.

I love you.

I play 'neath the sky of blue.

I dance on the bright rainbow,

On a moonbeam, on a sunbeam, ever singing.

Here I go!"

"Oh, I like that! I like the fairy song," said Sylvia.

"And the fairies like you, Sylvia. They told me so," said the golden cat.

Sylvia's eyes shone with the excitement of it all.

"But they don't know me, Golden. Or do they?"

"Yes, they know you," said her cat. "And they wish you'd come to Fairyland. Their wings are too small to carry you, or they'd send you a pair. They wish, though, that you'd get gold dust on your gown, but I can't tell you how to get it," and the golden Skippy sat down plunk too.

They sat together, and they thought, and they thought, and it was Sylvia who had the ideas.

"I know," she said. "See, up on the hill, dandelions—yellow as gold! I'll go up there. I'll roll in the dandelions and over the hill. Come on. There's no harm in trying," and she laughed gaily.

Sylvia and the golden cat ran down the valley and over the hill. And they rolled and they rolled in the yellow blossoms until they were covered with stains from the grass and the stems, and on they rolled down the goldened hill. And when they were tired, they looked at Sylvia, and she'd not one bit of gold dust on her gown. But she had had fun, and she did laugh loudly.

And the weary farmer off in the field, who had been up with the birds, laughed gaily too, for he caught the laughing on the breeze. And he felt much better, and he said, "Get up, get up!" to his trudging team. "Get up! Sylvia's up to something to-day. I can tell by the laughing.



It sort of makes a fellow feel good. Get up, get up!" And the farmer stepped faster, and he whistled a tune. But he didn't know that Sylvia was looking for gold dust for her gown, so she could roll fairy hoops and drink fairy tea.

"We'll try something else, Skippy," Sylvia said to her cat. And she sat down plunk to think again. "I know. I know where there's gold—on the milkman's wagon. And I know the milkman. He has

M I L K

on his wagon in shining gold. And it might come off. He might let me rub up against it, and I might get gold dust on my gown. Come on, Skippy! Come on!"

So down the hill and through the valley went Sylvia and the golden cat. And soon they came to the wagon by the curb.

"Hi, Sylvia!" said the milkman. (He always said "Hi.") "How are you to-day?"

"Fine," said Sylvia.

"And how's your cat?" said her friend.

"Oh, he's fine too," said Sylvia. "He's been to Fairyland. He has gold dust on his coat, you know."

"What did he see there?" asked the milkman.

"Oh, fairy rings, and golden hoops, and goblins dancing on the green. And I'd like to go. Would you help me, Mr. Milkman?" said the little girl.

"Why, sure," said the milkman. "I'll help you, of course. What do you want? A drink of milk to give you strength for the long journey ahead?"



"Oh, no, no!" laughed Sylvia. "You see those gold letters on your cart?"

"Yes," said the man.

"Do you think maybe the gold would come off? Maybe if you'd hold me up and rub me hard, I'd get gold dust on my gown, maybe."

And then it was the milkman's turn to laugh, and he filled the street with his merriment.

"Well, it's worth a try, Sylvia," he said. "Anything at all is worth a try."

And he lifted the little girl up in his arms and rubbed her hard on the side of his wagon. But nothing happened. The paint was fast.

"It doesn't work," said the big milkman. "But never mind. It was smart to think of it. And mark you me, you'll find some yet. You'll get to Fairyland, I'll be bound. So don't feel sad, for you've made me glad."

And away the milkman went with his cart, whistling merrily, and laughing each time he turned a corner. "Gold dust on her gown!" he said. "Well, what do you think of that?"

Sylvia sat down plunk on the curb. And she thought, and she thought, and she thought some more. And she thought of the old man with the cane. He sat all day on the big stone porch, and he never smiled or said "Hello." But he had a cane with a golden head. She'd seen it shining in the sun, and the gold dust might come off.

"Come on, Skippy! It's worth a try," she said.

So up the steps of the big stone house went Sylvia and the golden cat.

The old man stared at them over his paper in his same sour way.

"Good-morning, sir," said the little girl.

The man didn't answer.

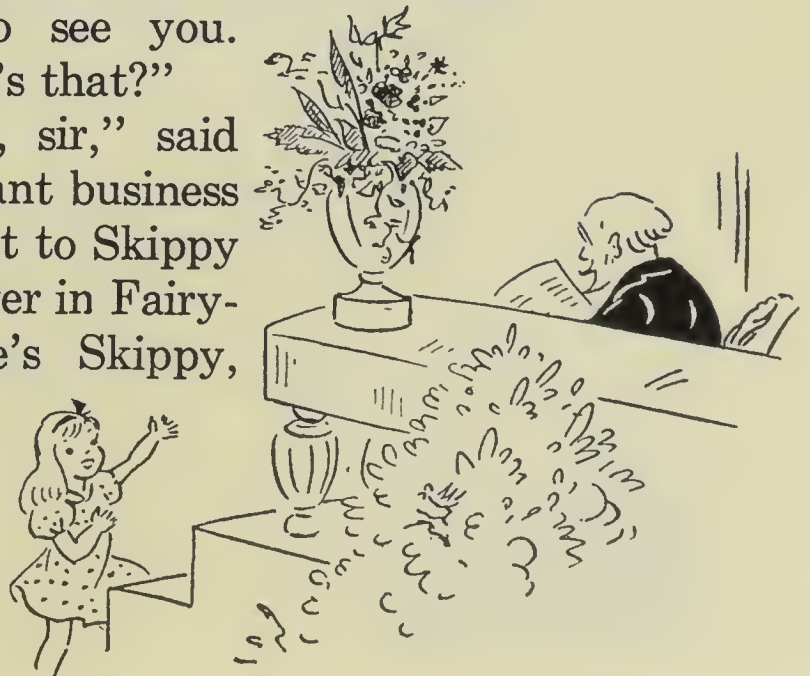
"My name is Sylvia, just so's you'll know, and this is my cat. How do you do?"

"What do you want?" asked the man with the cane.

"I . . . well . . . well, I might say this. When anyone comes to my house, sir, I say first thing, 'Why, hello! I'm very glad to see you. Won't you sit down?' Yes, I say that," said Sylvia.

"Oh, you do?" said the old man, and a twinkle crept into his hard old eyes. "Well, hello, Miss Sylvia. I'm very glad to see you. Won't you sit down? How's that?"

"That's fine, thank you, sir," said Sylvia. "I came on important business . . . leastways, it's important to Skippy and me. I . . . Were you ever in Fairyland? Golden's been—he's Skippy,



you know, for everyday. I want to go too, so I need gold dust for my gown. I've tried the dandelions, and I've tried the milkman's wagon, but the gold doesn't come off, so I was wondering about your cane. It's goldened, isn't it? I've seen it shining."

"Yes, it's golden," said the old man.

"Do you think if I rubbed against it, maybe the gold would come off?" said the little girl.

"No," said the man, "I don't think it would. It's very hard. But I'll tell you what. Bring your fairy here, and I'll buy some gold dust from him for you."

"Oh, but, Mr. Gold Cane, you can't *buy* gold dust! You have to find it," said Sylvia. "It's . . . it's like fun . . . you have to find it."

"I see," said the sour old man. "Well, I've not found any fun for a long, long time."

"Well, I've lots to spare," said the little girl, and she climbed up upon the old man's knee. "Have you a doll house?"

"No," said the man.

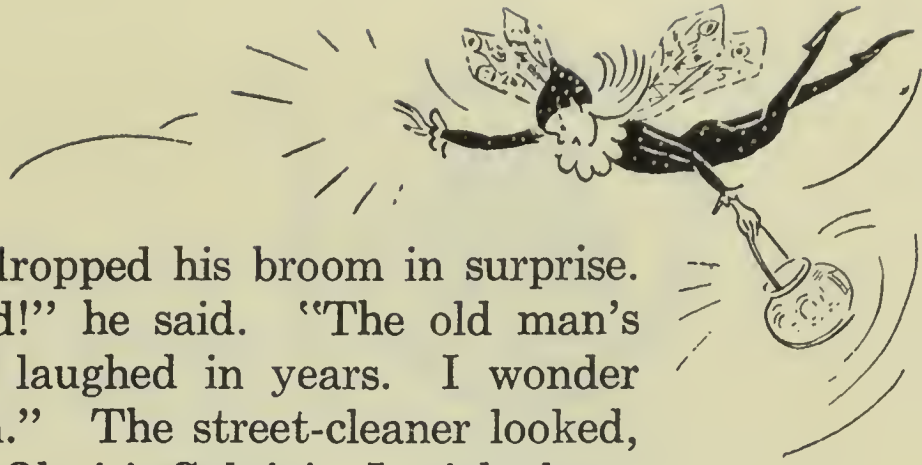
"Well, I have a doll house, and it's more fun! I'll lend it to you. It'll make you very happy, specially on rainy days. And I have Golden. He's a lovely cat. And I have my daddy, but I can't lend him, for I need him and Mummy. And if you have a cent, you can get some popcorn. And do you know what?"

"No, what?" said the old man.

"There's a mouse in our cellar," said Sylvia.

The old man began to laugh, and he laughed, and he laughed.





The street-cleaner dropped his broom in surprise. "Well, upon my word!" he said. "The old man's laughing! He hasn't laughed in years. I wonder what's come over him." The street-cleaner looked, and he saw Sylvia. "Oh, it's Sylvia! I might have known. That wee one has a heart of sunshine. It's a wonder there's not gold dust in her hair."

The old man was still laughing when he said: "I'd like to see the mouse, Sylvia, and I'll buy myself that popcorn. And if I were you, I'd go home now and worry no more. I think to-night you'll get gold dust on your gown. Somehow, I think a fairy will come."

And do you know, the old man was right? A fairy came with a pot of gold, while Sylvia slept. And he scattered it over her gown, and he whispered to her: "To-day you've scattered a lot of gladness. You set the whole wide world laughing. And that's what gold dust *is*, my dear,—laughter and singing."

And he closed his paint pot and went his way.

The next day found Sylvia in Fairyland. She went there with her golden cat. But what she saw, she can't remember. It was so long ago. You see, all this happened when she was little, and now she's five.



Chocolate Fudge



I know a little turtle, and his name is Tommy. He's a very nice little turtle, as turtles go, but he's very shy, and he'll never talk to a soul but me. If you waited to hear this story from him, you'd never hear it, so I think I'll tell you how we got together, Tommy and I.

It was all very strange, and all such fun. It was one Saturday morning. I was hunting for angle worms. I don't know why I was hunting worms, but haven't you gone hunting lots of times when you didn't know why or even what? I'd not found one single angle worm, and I'd lifted every stone from the end of the cow barn right down to the creek.

"Oh, fudge!" I said, and I sat on a log.

"Oh, don't!" said a turtle. It was Tommy, and he was crying. "You've hurt my feelings."

I started to laugh.

"Well, if saying 'Oh, fudge!' can hurt your feelings, all I can say is you're . . . you're . . . you're just pernickety. I always say 'Fudge!' "

"And I always want fudge," sobbed Tommy Turtle. And the creek came up almost three feet higher, for you know turtles when they start to cry!

"Well! I'm surprised at you," I said, "crying like that just because you want fudge. Shame on you, Mr. Turtle!"

"I can't help it. And call me Tommy," said the little fellow, as he wrung out his handkerchief for the fifteenth time.

"Tommy," I said sternly. "The very idea! A big, hard-shelled turtle like you sitting there crying in the creek all day! I presume you have been there all day?"

"All week," he said.

"All week? That's worse—seven times worse," I said. "Crying all week just because you want fudge! What kind of fudge?"

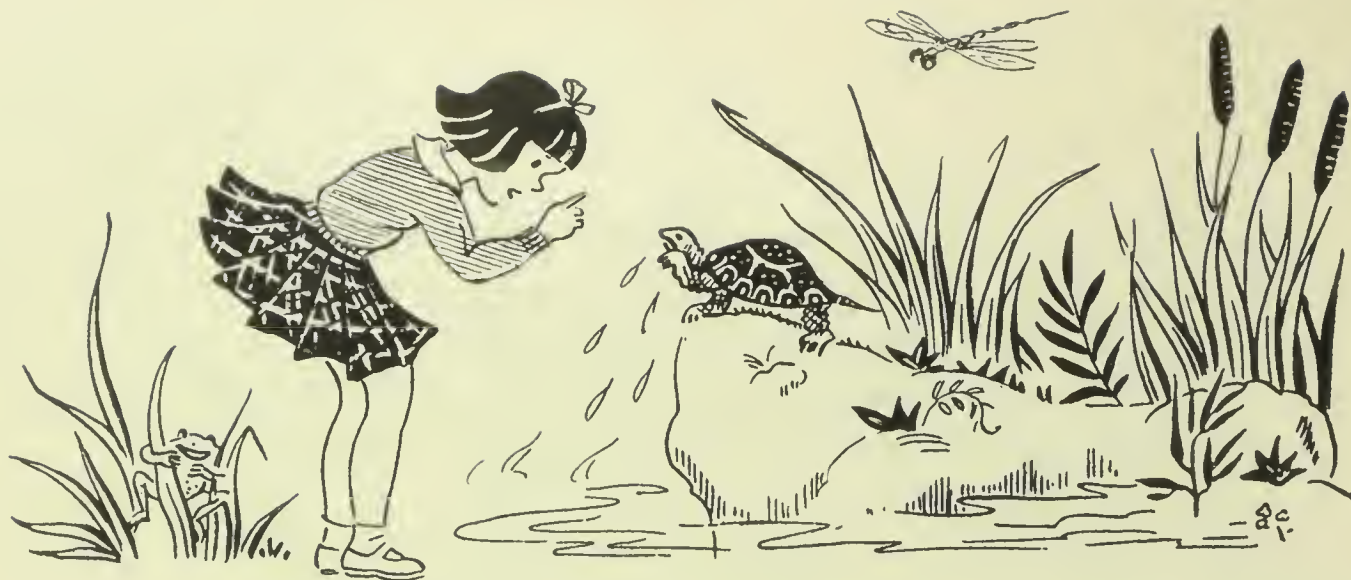
"Chocolate fudge made with cream," he sobbed.

"The very idea! Chocolate fudge made with cream! Chocolate fudge made with cream?" I said. It *did* sound good, and I licked my lips. "Well, there's no use crying. Why don't you come out of your shell and make yourself some fudge?"

"I can't make chocolate fudge ever again," sobbed Tommy. "I've lost the song."

"The song?" I was surprised at that. "I didn't know you made fudge with a song."

"Yes, the song," said Tommy. "I always made fudge—my fudge—with a song. I was called Tommy T. Baker, the Chocolate Fudge Maker, once upon a time. But I've lost the song," and Tommy wrung



out his handkerchief again. "And do you know?" he went on. "I think it was stolen, but of course I'm not sure."

This was exciting! Fudge for a song! It would be mighty handy when you had no penny to buy fudge for yourself, just to sing.

I shook Tommy Turtle good and hard, and told him to stop his nonsensical weeping . . . that if anything were lost, the thing to do was to find it . . . if anything were stolen, well, we'd just get the thief. And do you know, Tommy'd not thought of that?

He put his handkerchief away, and looked at me.

"Little girl," he said, "that's downright smart. We'll find the song."

"How does it go?" I said to Tommy.

"That's just the trouble. If I only knew!" answered Tommy T.

"Do you mean to tell me that you made fudge with a song, and now you don't even . . . you can't even remember the tune?" I said.

"I can't remember a single note. It's gone completely out of my shell, I tell you. The song's lost," said Tommy.

"A song's never lost," I said. "Someone has surely picked it up. The song is lying in somebody's heart. Come on, Tommy Turtle! We'll find the song. We'll ask the birds, and we'll ask the bees. They've heard you singing it surely?"

"Yes," said Tommy, "they've heard me sing it, of course, all but the last line. I've never told anyone the last line. The last line's what made the chocolate fudge. I had it written on an alder leaf, and now it's gone, branch and all."

"Well, come along," I said. And Tommy and a dancing-me went off down the creek to hunt for the song.

The first person we met was an old green frog. He was catching flies.

"Hello, Mr. Frog," I said. "Have you a song in your heart?"

"Oh, yes, I have. Never a day without a song in my heart," said the frog. "To-day the song's about three fat green flies and the sun that makes my wet back warm."

"Oh, fudge, Mr. Frog!" I said, and Tommy winced. "Dig deeper down into your heart. See if there's a song about chocolate candy—the one that Tommy used to sing."

"Oh, yes. Tommy did sing a song in the long, long ago. Let me see. It went like this:

*Chocolate fudge—cherries, nuts, and cream,
Tra-la-la, . . .*

That's all I know," said the frog.



"Can't you go on from there, Tommy?" I said.
Tommy broke into singing:

"Chocolate fudge—cherries, nuts, and cream . . .

That shouldn't be *cherries* there," he said. "It should be *sugar*.

Chocolate fudge—sugar, nuts, and cream . . ."

And we went down the creek singing what had come from the old frog's heart, and we met a magpie. She was scolding, as usual.

"Maggie!" called Tommy Turtle to the bird.

"Oh, don't bother me! Don't bother me," said the magpie. "I've had enough bother to-day. The children have done nothing but chatter, chatter, chatter, and Mr. Magpie hasn't brought home a single thing to-day. There's a whole nestful of robin's eggs down in the west pasture, and he hasn't even made the slightest effort to go after them. Last time I stole a few eggs from Rowena Robin, she raised a fine row and didn't speak to me for weeks. So he can just go and get those eggs, or see his wife and family starve before his very eyes. I won't go a single step."

"But, Maggie, surely you don't steal, do you?" Tommy said in surprise.

"Yes, I steal," said the magpie.

"But it's wrong to steal," said Tommy.

"Wrong? Magpies don't think it's wrong. We steal from other birds. We steal anything that's good to eat or anything that is shiny and bright.



But you needn't worry, Tommy Turtle. There's nothing about you that's shiny and bright. Does that little girl you're with know that you've been crying for a week?"

"Yes, I know," I said to the bird. "He's been crying because he's lost something. And, Mrs. Magpie, it wouldn't chance that you are the one who stole Tommy's song, would it?"

"No, I don't steal songs. I rob nests. And now go away about your business," she said.

Mrs. Magpie went on with her scolding: "Mr. Magpie, are you going to the west pasture after those robin's eggs, or aren't you?"

And Mr. Magpie got out of his rocking chair, disgustedly, picked up his hat, and flew westward, humming:

*"Chocolate fudge—sugar, nuts, and cream,
Chocolate fudge, tra-la-la-la,
Tra-la-la-la-la-la-la-la . . ."*

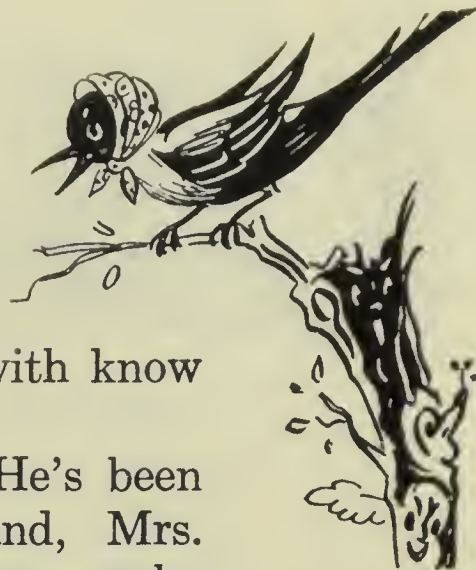
"That's it . . . that's it!" cried Tommy Turtle. "Mr. Magpie knows the song. Run, little girl, run! Get him!"

And I ran, but the bird was flying. I couldn't catch him, so we never found out if Mr. Magpie knew the next line of the song or not.

We met a tree toad.

"Hello, Tommy," said the tree toad. "Nice day, isn't it? Looking for someone?"

"No, we're looking for *something*," said Tommy. "Tree Toad, do you remember my chocolate fudge?"





"I'll never forget it," said the tree toad. "We called you Tommy T. Baker, the Chocolate Fudge Maker. And all of a sudden . . . *Zing!* and no more fudge. Whatever happened, Tommy?"

"I lost the song," said Tommy.

"The song? Oh, yes, you made fudge with a song, didn't you? I remember," and the tree toad sang:

*"Chocolate fudge, chocolate fudge—
Sugar, nuts, and cream . . ."*

"Do you know the rest?" I asked excitedly.

"Sure," said the tree toad. "Sure I know.

*Chocolate fudge—sugar, nuts, and cream,
Chocolate fudge tastes just like a dream.
You put some cherries in it . . ."*

He stumbled.

"You . . . you . . . put some cherries in it . . ."

That's all I know," and the tree toad stopped.

"Oh, fudge!" I said.

And on we went in search of our song.

We asked the chickadee, and she said she'd never even heard of fudge, let alone the song. We asked the flying squirrel for the song in his heart, and he sang of hazel nuts and pine trees, of holes in fences and gum on the spruce. We asked the butterfly, but she had a cold, and she couldn't sing at all.



And then we asked the porcupine if he knew the fudge song, and he didn't. And then we asked the muskrat, the beaver, and the small brown bear, but none of them knew how to make fudge with singing.

Then I began to get hungry. Would you believe it? I wanted some fudge so much myself that I was just about to cry too. And wouldn't I have been ashamed if I had cried in front of Tommy? 'Cause I'd scolded him so for the very same thing.

And just when we were about to give up hunting for our song and go and buy a lollypop instead, we heard a voice up in a tree calling: "Whoo-oo, whoo-oo, whoo-oo are you looking for?"

It was the wise old owl, who knows all things.

"We're looking for Tommy's song," I said. "He's lost his song. We've hunted the whole day. We've asked the birds, and we've asked the bees."

"Did you have any luck?" asked the wise old owl.

"Yes, a little," said Tommy. "We found half of my song. But that's no good for making fudge. We need it all. We can't make fudge with half a song."

"Listen, you two," said the wise old owl. "Didn't you know that in this world you can't get things just for singing? You've got to work too, a little, you know."

I looked at Tommy, and he looked at me. And all of a sudden, we knew he was right. We knew how silly we'd been.



"Go get the sugar and nuts and cream, and get to work and stir and stir," said the owl. "And I'll bet my best midnight hoot that you'll think of the song before you're through."

So we got the saucepan and the other things, and we built a fire under a rock, and we stirred and stirred. And soon our hearts were filled with singing, and soon we burst right out into song:

*"Chocolate fudge—sugar, nuts, and cream,
Chocolate fudge tastes just like a dream,"*

sang Tommy.

I took it up from there:

*"It's smooth as honey velvet, perfume divine,
Made by Tommy Turtle, Baker . . ."*

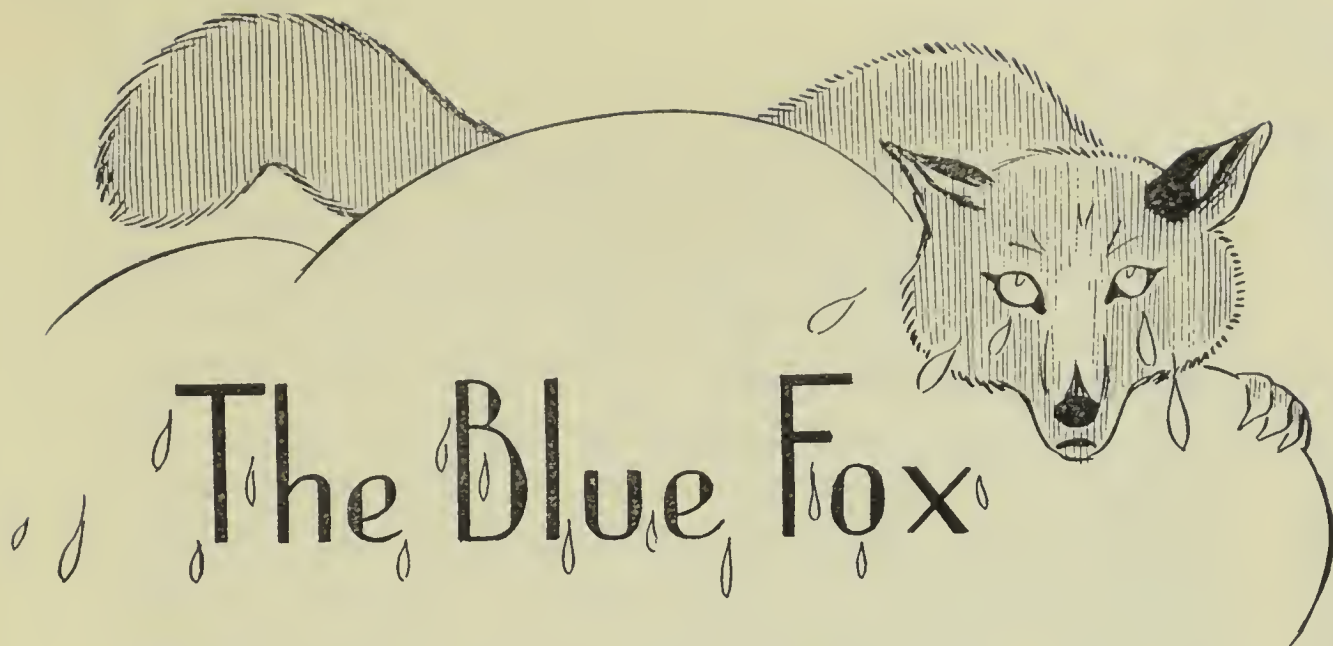
"And a friend of mine,"

sang Tommy.

And the fudge bubbled and plumped in the pot and was the most beautiful fudge in the world when we poured it into the pan.

We gave the wise old owl the very first piece. You know why.

We treated everyone in the woodland, and we'll treat you too if you can find us. If you can't, well, you needn't care, for you know now how to do things for yourself. A little work, a little singing—that's all!



The time had come. Peter Watson must go to school. He didn't much want to go to school, but he was seventeen bricks high. I know, for I'm the one that measured him on the red wall. And when you're seventeen bricks . . . well . . .

"Yes, Peter, the time has come," I said.

"But I'm not ready to go to school yet," said Peter. "Maybe if you counted again, maybe it'd come to sixteen or ten, and then I could play a little longer."

I tried. "One, two, three," right up to fifteen, sixteen, seventeen. "No, Peter," I said. "It's seventeen. The time has come."

"Oh, dear!" said Peter, and he sat down with his chin in his hands. "I don't want to go, I tell you. I've got so much to do. Don't you know that? I haven't looked into the mouse's nest yet. I haven't been under the shed. I haven't even looked in that new ant hill. And besides, I promised Peter Watson I'd take him to see the blue fox." Peter laughed at his own joke.



"But don't you want to learn," I said, "to learn how to count and spell, and how to be a man?"

"I don't want to count and spell, 'cause I don't need to count and spell. I don't have to learn to be a man, 'cause I am a man now. My mother said so, and my mother ought to know. And besides, I'm bigger than Mr. Rabbit, and he's a rabbit man. And that's another thing—Mr. Rabbit will be lonesome if I go to school. He doesn't want me to go, and neither does the cat, nor the dog, nor the blue fox."

"Who is this blue fox?" I asked. I'd never heard of him before. "And what makes him blue?"

"I don't know," said Peter, "and nobody knows. But I'm going to find out. I haven't got his address yet, but Mr. Rabbit knows where he lives, and he's going to tell me. Mr. Rabbit says that this blue fox is as blue as the sky, and his face is like a cloud, and he's crying."

"The blue fox is crying?" I said in surprise.

"Yes, all the time he's crying," said Peter. "And you know that lake that's up there on the hill? Well, it's foxes' tears. And if that blue fox stopped crying, the lake would dry up, most likely. And so how can I go to school when I have so many things to do?"

I could see that his mind was made up. I was hoping that he would ask me to go with him when Mr. Rabbit told him the way to the blue fox's den, but he didn't. I found out what happened, just the same, and I'll tell you.

The address of the blue fox was on a lettuce leaf. Mr. Rabbit wrote it there with beet juice for ink, and it really made a very pretty note.

Peter didn't look at the note until he got to the edge of the woodland. And what do you suppose? He couldn't read it. So he had to go back to Mr. Rabbit's hutch.

"Mr. Rabbit," said Peter, "you know this address you gave me on the lettuce leaf? Well, I'd much sooner have it in my head. I'm awfully good at remembering things. Why, I remember . . ."

"You mean," said Mr. Rabbit, looking Peter Watson right in the eye, "you mean you can't read, don't you?"

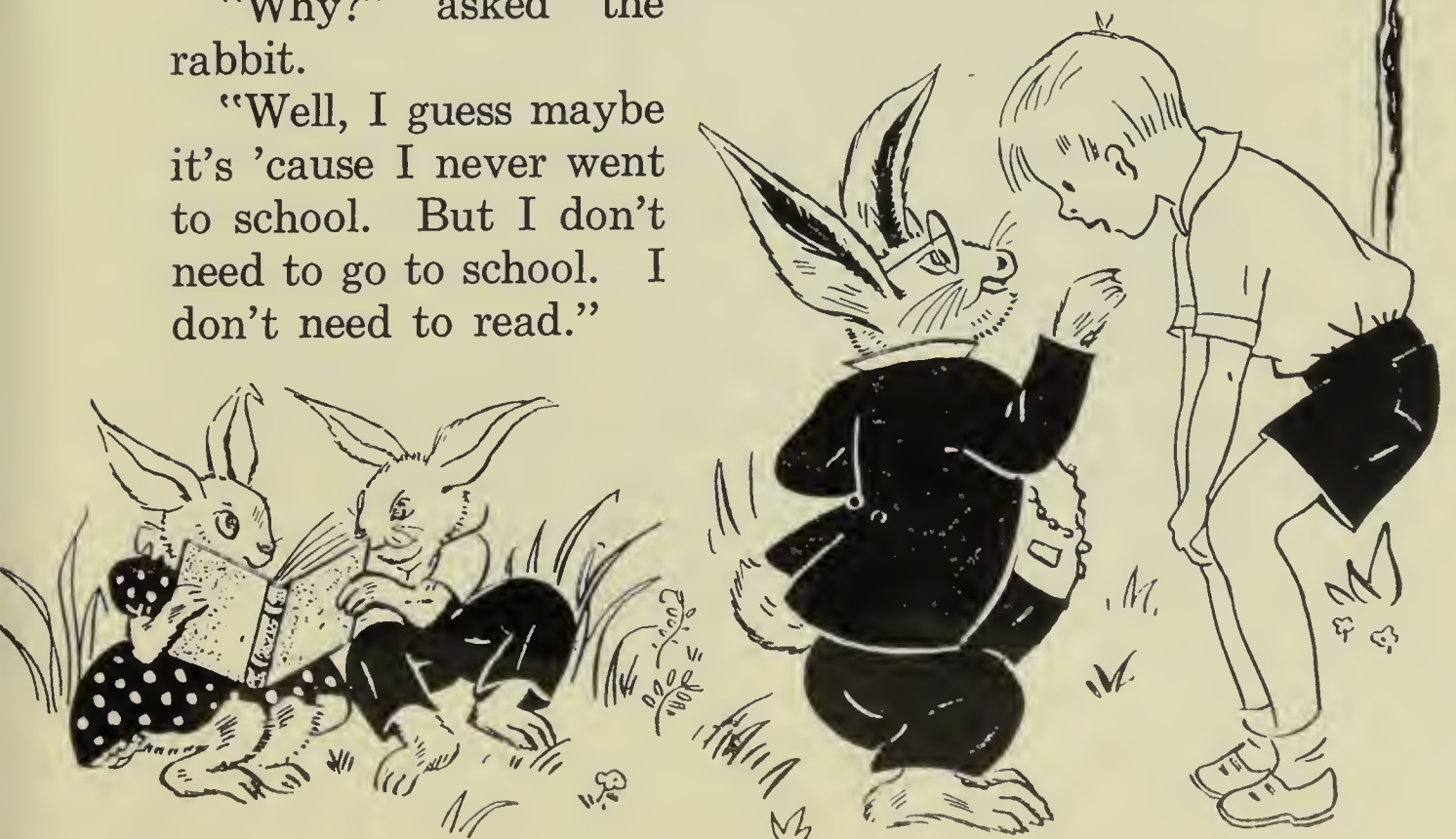
"Well, I don't forget things when I'm told them, honest," said Peter. "Don't you believe me?"

"Of course I do," said the rabbit. "But I still don't believe you can read. Now can you, Peter?"

"No," said Peter Watson slowly. "No, I can't."

"Why?" asked the rabbit.

"Well, I guess maybe it's 'cause I never went to school. But I don't need to go to school. I don't need to read."



"Oh, yes, you do. You look big enough to me to be at school. You must be seventeen bricks by now, aren't you?" said the rabbit, measuring Peter with a keen pink eye.

Peter nodded his head, "Yes," and held the lettuce leaf out to Mr. Rabbit.

"Well, it says here," said Mr. Rabbit: "*Go to the edge of the woodland. Take the path to the right. Go along that path to the deep red mushroom bed, and then go sixty-three steps in an easterly direction, and you'll find yourself at the blue fox's den. Can you remember that?*"

"Sure," said Peter. "I can remember more than that. Thank you, Mr. Rabbit. *Go to the edge of the woodland. Take the path to the right. Go along that path till you come to the red mushroom bed . . .*" And saying it over and over to himself, Peter Watson dashed once more gaily away.

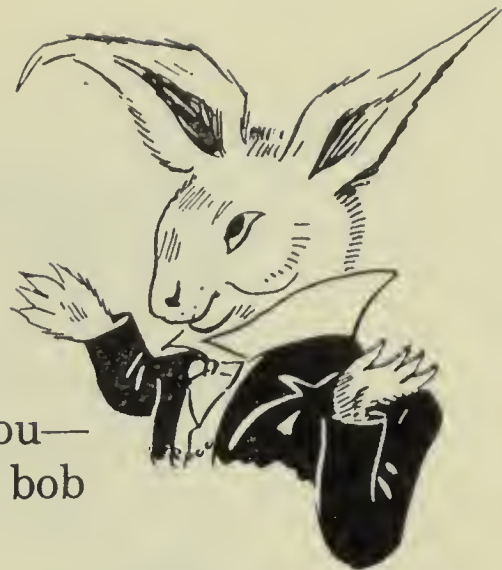
And he came again to the edge of the woodland.

"Now *take the path to the right,*" he said. (You see, he remembered.) *To the right.* He stopped. Which way was the right? There were four ways to go—that side, that side, ahead, and back,—and he must go to the right. He looked around for someone to help him, but there was no one about, so back he went again to Mr. Rabbit.

"Did you find him already?" asked Mr. Rabbit, in great surprise. "Why, I didn't think you'd be any more than to the edge of the woodland."

"I . . . I wasn't," stammered Peter. "But . . . a . . . Mr. Rabbit, which way is right?"

"So you don't know right from left, eh?" And Mr. Rabbit began to laugh. "That's funny, not to know right from left, Peter. Of course you can't help it if you've never learned. Well, I'll tell you—the right path is the path that has the bob white's nest."



"Oh, I know where that is! Thank you, Mr. Rabbit," said Peter, and off he ran again.

"He'll be back," winked the rabbit to a passing fly. "He can't count to sixty-three, and he doesn't know the east from the west."

To the edge of the woodland . . . the path to the right . . . the bob white's nest . . . the deep red mushroom bed . . . and Peter stopped again.

"*Sixty-three steps in an easterly direction!* Oh, I can't count! I can go to only ten. What'll I do? I can't go back to the rabbit again. He'd just laugh in my face. I can try counting to sixty-three, and I might find the place. And east is where the sun gets up—I do know that, but I bet you Mr. Rabbit thinks I don't."

And Peter began to step carefully towards the sun. "One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten, twenty, fourteen, seventeen, eleven, ninety-five, sixty-three . . ." And he stepped right into a tiny stream.

"Oh, dear! This can't be the place," he said.

"Can't be what place?" said an old frog, blinking his eyes in interest at this hopping boy who was counting in such a funny way.

"It isn't where the blue fox lives, I guess," said Peter.

"It certainly isn't," said the frog. "It's where I live, and that crying fox needn't come over here."

"Do you know him?" asked Peter.

"I certainly do know him. I knew him in his happy days too, when he was a beautiful golden red. I wish you could see him now."

"I do too," said Peter. "I'm hunting for him."

"His coat is as blue as the sky. His poor mother is the one I'm sorry for. It keeps her busy hemming handkerchiefs. Do you know how many handkerchiefs that blue fox used yesterday?"

"No," said Peter.

"Five hundred and six . . . that's how many," said the frog. "And all they have is five hundred and seven. Just one clean one left at the end of the day. Something will have to be done."

"M-m," said Peter. "Maybe I could do something if I could find him. I bet I'd know how to stop him crying if I only knew where he was."

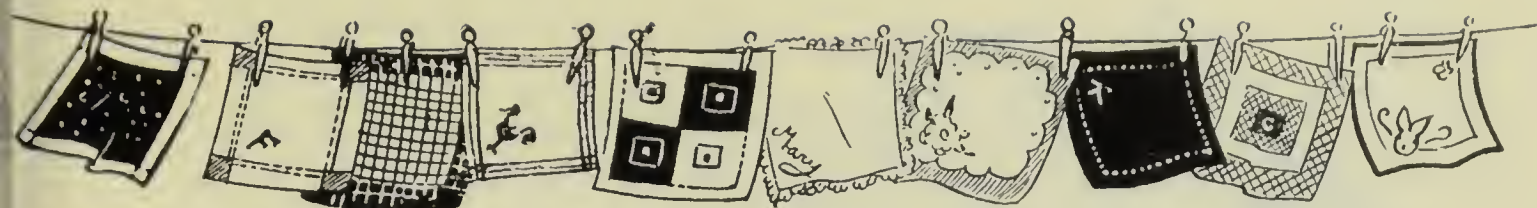
"It's not very hard to find him," said the frog.

"He lives just over that hill and down in the hollow."

Peter was glad he didn't have to ask anyone else about counting to sixty-three.

"There won't be much trouble knowing which house he lives in when you get there, for his mother will be washing





handkerchiefs on the back porch," said Peter's new friend, "and the blue fox will be sobbing on the front porch. I hope you'll find out what is wrong. None of us know. Mrs. Fox won't tell."

Peter ran over the hill and down. Mr. Frog was right. Mother Fox, red as the sunset, was washing handkerchiefs on the back porch, and on the front porch, sobbing into a big white handkerchief, sat a fox as blue as the sky.

Peter went over to him.

"Hello, Blue Fox," he said. "How are you?"

"Fine. How . . . how . . . how are you? Oh, oh, oh!" still sobbed the fox.

"Oh, I'm fine, thank you," said Peter. "My name is Peter Watson. I know where there's a mouse's nest. Would you like to see it? And I know most everything."

"Do you?" said the sobbing blue fox. "Mama," he called, "Mama, come here. There's a little boy out here—a nice little boy,—and he says he knows everything, Mama."

Mother Fox came running around the corner of the house, wiping her red paws on her apron. She looked Peter up and down, and she nodded her head in approval. She knew right away that she could tell her secret to Peter Watson.

"Do you really know everything, Peter?" asked Mother Fox.



"Most everything," said Peter.

"Well . . . well, if I tell you what makes my little son blue . . . if I tell you why he cries all the time, can you keep it a secret?" said Mother Fox.

"Yes," said Peter proudly. "I can keep secrets."

"Well, we need help. Blue Fox is crying because he doesn't know how, and he'll never stop till he finds out how, and I . . . I just can't face anyone to ask."

"How what?" asked Peter.

"You may not know either, and that would be awful, for we've never told anyone about it before," said Mrs. Fox.

"Oh, I'll likely know," said Peter. "But *what* is it? Just ask me." And his chest swelled importantly.

Mrs. Fox held her breath for a minute, and looking up and down to see that there was no one else about, she said to Peter: "How do you spell *cabbage*?"

Peter Watson was very still. He didn't know how to spell *cabbage*. He didn't know how to spell anything.

"Oh!" said Mrs. Fox. "Won't you tell us, please? Blue Fox wants to know, and I don't know how, and I'm ashamed to ask. You see, I never went to school, and you said you knew everything."

"I do know everything," said Peter slowly, "but how to spell *cabbage*, . . . and how to count to sixty-three," he added under his breath.

Blue Fox's sobs became louder than ever, and Peter had to get up on the step to get out of the wet.

"Oh, dear!" said Mrs. Fox. "It's no use. He doesn't know, son. But you won't tell anyone that we asked, will you?" she said to Peter. "You wouldn't mortify us so."

Peter was mortified himself.

"If he'd only known!" wailed the blue fox.

Peter straightened his shoulders and held his head high.

"I don't know how to spell it now," he said, "but I'll find out, Mrs. Fox. Didn't you notice that I was seventeen bricks high? That's the size to go to school. I'm going to school, Mrs. Fox. I'm starting this very year. I'm going to learn how to count to sixty-three, how to know right from left, and how to spell *cabbage*. And I'll be back to tell you. So, Blue Fox, if you'll just slow down a little in your crying, so your mother won't have to wash so much, I'll be back in a few days to tell you what it is you want to know."

Peter ran towards home.

"Did you find the blue fox?" I asked of him.

"Yes," he said.

"Well, what makes him blue? Do you know?"

"Yes, but I can't tell anyone just now. But I might as well tell you this—I'm going to school. I want to go to school so I'll know things."

One day, several weeks later, I saw Peter Watson running towards the deep woods. I followed him.

"C-a-b-b-a-g-e," he was saying to himself. "C-a-b-b-a-g-e. I know it. I know it."

I waited for him by the bob white's nest. He came upon me suddenly.

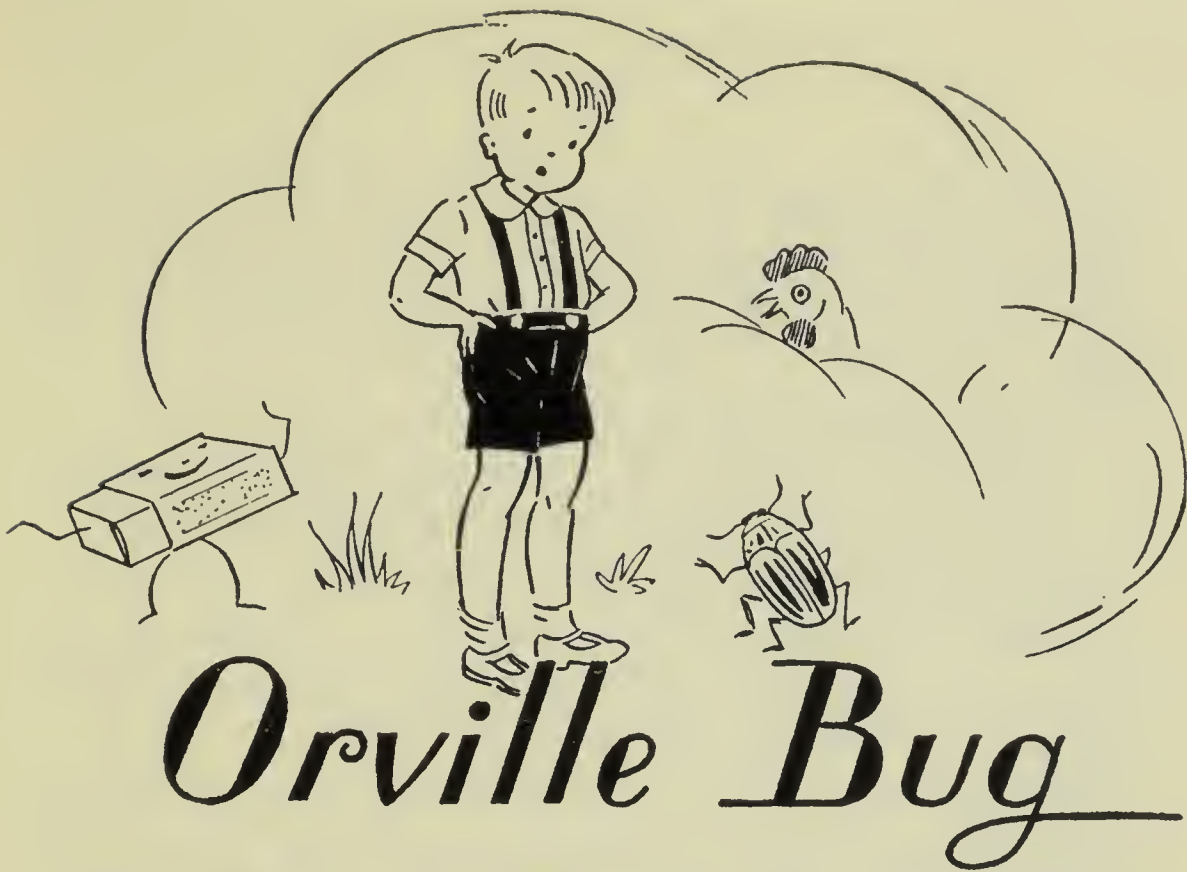
"Oh . . . oh . . . hello!" he said. "You know that lake up over the hill? Well, it's going to dry up."

"Is that right?" I said.

"Yes, for the blue fox has stopped his crying, I bet you. And all on account of me too, all because I went to school. Mr. Rabbit'll be surprised, and so will the frog. And *cabbage* is a pretty big word to spell too, I bet you."

I laughingly agreed with Peter Watson, who measured seventeen bricks on the red wall.





Orville Bug

Once there was a little bug. Once there was a little boy. Once there was a little box. And somehow the three of them got together. The little box was paper. The little boy was nice. And the little bug was Orville.

Orville was in the box. He'd been put there by the little boy, and he didn't like it a little bit, for Orville was going to a party. His friends were waiting for him now, to come with the oat seed.

"Oh, dear!" he cried. "I'll have to get out of here. Little Boy, Little Boy! Let me out."

But the little boy didn't hear, for the paper was thick, and the lid was tight.

"Well," said Orville, "if he thinks he can keep me, a smart potato bug like me, in a match box, he's very much mistaken. I'll get out of here if I die in the attempt. That's an idea! I know what I'll do. I'll play dead, and he'll throw me away."



So Orville crept over to the far end of the match box, rolled his eyes pitifully, gave a tremendous sigh—"A-a-a-a-h-h-h-h," like that,—kicked up his heels, and died . . . only he didn't.

The box trembled on the table.

"Hey, what's going on there?" said the little boy.

Orville smiled to himself and held his breath.

Little Boy pulled the lid.

"Ah, you've died. What a shame! I didn't mean that you should die, little bug. I beg your pardon." And he dumped Orville out on the floor.

Orville was not slow to make use of his freedom, and quick as a flash he made for the fireplace to hide until he could make plans for his get-away.

But Little Boy was quicker than a flash, and before you could say Orville Bug, he had the little runaway between his fingers.

"Oh, so you thought you could get away, did you? Well, you can't."

And then Orville got mad, really mad.

"You let me go," he said to the little boy. "How'd you like to be stuck in a match box? Just 'cause I'm only a little striped potato bug, you take advantage of me."

"Now wait a minute," said the little boy. "You've got me all wrong. I just wanted to play with you, that's all. I didn't know you'd mind the match box so much. I like you, little bug. That's why I saved you when I saw you on the line fence. You might have got stepped on if it hadn't been for me. You shouldn't be out on a line fence all alone."

"Why shouldn't I? I'm a farmer. I know my way around the country. And just show me the farmer who'd stay boxed up. Just show me one . . . not Orville Bug, anyway."

Little Boy began to laugh, and he laughed until he fell on the floor and rolled in his merriment.

"Orville Bug! Orville!"

"Yes, Orville Bug, and it's no joke either. I could laugh at your pug nose and your dirty knees if I wanted to, but I have manners."

Little Boy was still laughing as he said: "Orville, I don't want to be rude. I don't mean to be rude. I'm just having fun, that's all. I won't keep you in the match box, Orville, but won't you stay and play with me?"

"No," said Orville. "I have things to do."

"What sort of things?" hinted Little Boy.

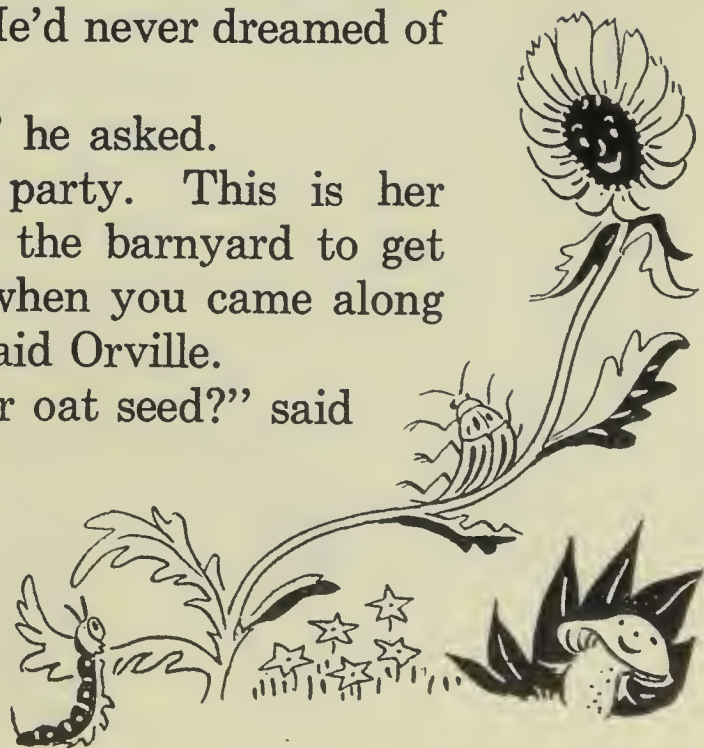
"Important things, like sliding down daisy stems and swimming streams with tadpoles, and chasing butterflies down Lily Lake Lane. And besides, I'm going to a party."

Little Boy's eyes grew wide in wonder. He'd never thought of bugs having fun. He'd never dreamed of bugs having parties.

"Whose party is it, Orville?" he asked.

"It's Gladys Glow-worm's party. This is her birthday. I had been over to the barnyard to get her an oat seed for a present when you came along and put me in a match box," said Orville.

"And what happened to your oat seed?" said Little Boy.



"You ask me that?" said Orville. "*You ask me,*" and his eyes snapped. "I don't know what happened to it. I just know I haven't got it, and I can't go back for another because the hens are out. If any of the hens saw me getting oats . . . well, that'd be the end of the party for sure."

"Would Gladys like a lump of sugar for her birthday, maybe?" asked Little Boy.

"Would she?" said Orville. "But I couldn't get it to her. I'm too small. I couldn't lug it."

"But I could," said Little Boy. "Take me to your party. I . . . I'd love to go to your party. But I guess I'm too big."

Orville Bug liked Little Boy. He didn't mean any harm. So Orville began to think.

"Little Boy, why don't you *think* yourself small? Then you could come and bring the sugar."

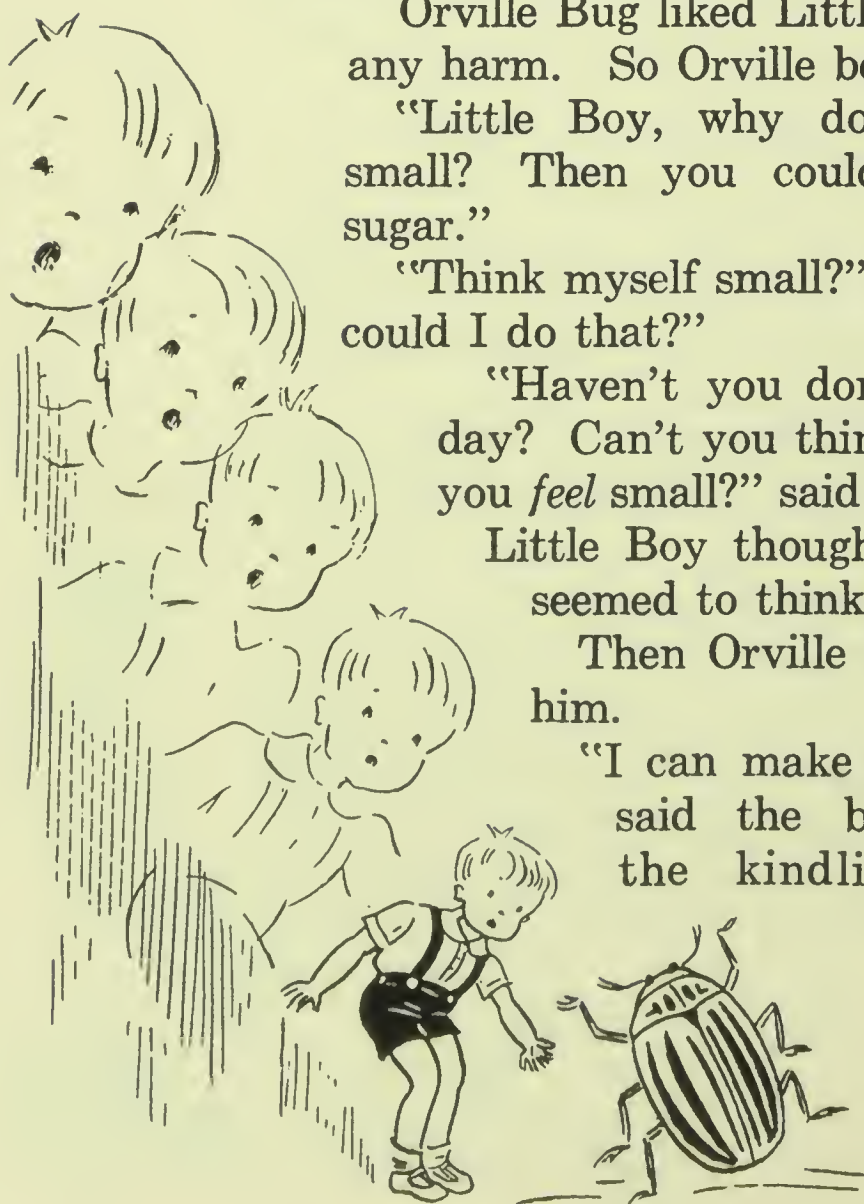
"Think myself small?" said Little Boy. "How could I do that?"

"Haven't you done any mean things to-day? Can't you think of something to make you *feel* small?" said Orville.

Little Boy thought and thought, but he seemed to think he'd been good all day.

Then Orville did a little thinking for him.

"I can make you feel small, I bet," said the bug. "Did you carry the kindling to-day for your mother?"



"Well, no, I didn't," said Little Boy.

"Did you pick up your pyjamas this morning?"
went on the bug.

"Well . . . well, no, I didn't," said Little Boy.

"And when your sister asked you to lend her your roller skates, what did you do then?"

And Little Boy felt so small when Orville had finished with his questioning that he shrank to the size of the potato bug and had to crawl up the table leg to get the sugar.

Orville and Little Boy were very careful leaving the house for fear they'd get stepped on, and slowly they made their way to the edge of the potato patch, where Orville Bug's friends were waiting.

Betty Butterfly was swinging on a daisy stem.

"Orville," she said, "who's that with you?"

"This is Little Boy," said Orville. "He's come to the party."

"He can't come," said Bonnie Beetle. "Boys kill bugs. He's come to kill us." And Bonnie crouched behind the old gray snail.

"He won't hurt us," said Orville. "He let me out of the match box."


"*Match box!*" screamed the ladybug. "Orville, were you in a match box?"

"Yes, but I played dead and got out," said Orville proudly.

"But who put you in there?" said Betty.

"Oh . . . well, it was Little Boy," said Orville.

"You see? He put you in. He's come to kill us all. He can't come to the party," said Bonnie.



Little Boy felt smaller than ever when he thought of all the caterpillars he'd squashed, so he whispered to Orville: "It's all right, Orville. I'll hide behind the cowslip plant and watch." And in a loud voice he said: "Good-bye, bugs. I'll be going. I hope you have a nice time at the party."

"We shall," said Betty, "if the hen doesn't come."

"Oh, don't mention that hen!" said Bonnie Beetle, trembling again.

"Thanks for the sugar, Little Boy," said Orville. "Thanks for everything." And Orville winked at Little Boy as Little Boy walked away towards the cowslip plant.

Soon the party was made ready for the glow-worm. She had not yet come. It was to be a surprise for her—a complete surprise.

Orville seemed to be the ring-leader.

"It's a good thing I let him go," thought Little Boy.



It was Orville who spread the toadstool table, and set the lump of sugar right on the middle with the help of the beetle, the earth-worm, and the garden grub. It was Orville who asked the daisies to come nearer for decoration. It was Orville who fixed an easy chair for old Grandpappy Army-worm.

"That's fine, Orville," squeaked the old worm. "That's fine. I'll be able to see Gladys nicely from here. I wonder what's keeping her. Dear me, dear me, everyone of my legs is full of rheumatiz!"

Little Boy had to put his hand over his mouth to keep from laughing out loud. Then he heard the sound of whirring wings, and Gladys Glow-worm arrived in all her glory on the back of a big fat bumble-bee.

She cried aloud in delight: "All my friends, all my friends, how good you are, how good you are!"



And two shining tears ran down her face as they gathered around her and sang:

*"Happy birthday to you!
Happy birthday to you!
Happy birthday, Gladys Glow-worm,
Happy birthday to you!"*

"And it is a happy birthday," said Gladys. "How lucky I am to have such thoughtful friends!"

"It was Orville who thought of it," said Bonnie Beetle.

"And he almost got killed to-day, too," said Betty.

"An awful little boy put him in a match box," said Bonnie.

"He wasn't an awful little boy," said Orville. "He was a nice little boy. We might need him too, if the hen comes."

And as if it had all been planned as in a story, at that very moment they heard that dreadful sound, the awfulest sound to a bug's ear: "Cut-cut-cut-cut-cut-a-cut, cut-cut-cut-cut-cut-a-cut!"

"Oh!" they all screamed. "The hen! The hen!"

"Ah, cut-cut-cut! So you're having a party?" said the big black hen. "I saw Orville Bug getting the oat seed, and I said to myself: 'Here's where I have a big party, too.' Um-m-m, how fine and fat you are all looking! And sugar, too!"

"The little boy . . . the little boy!" thought Orville. "He can help us." And turning towards the cowslip plant, he called: "Little Boy, Little Boy, get big . . . get big, and chase this hen!"

But Little Boy couldn't get big, for he felt so small about all the mean things he had done.

"What'll I do? What'll I do?" he cried.

"Think! Oh, think, Little Boy!" said Orville. "Think of all the big things you've done to-day. Didn't you do some good in the world to-day? You must have done something. You're a nice little boy."

"No," said the little boy.

"Did you smile at anyone who was sad to-day?" asked the bug.

"Well, yes, I did. I smiled at the old newsman at the corner," said Little Boy.

"Did you help any old person across the street?" went on the bug.

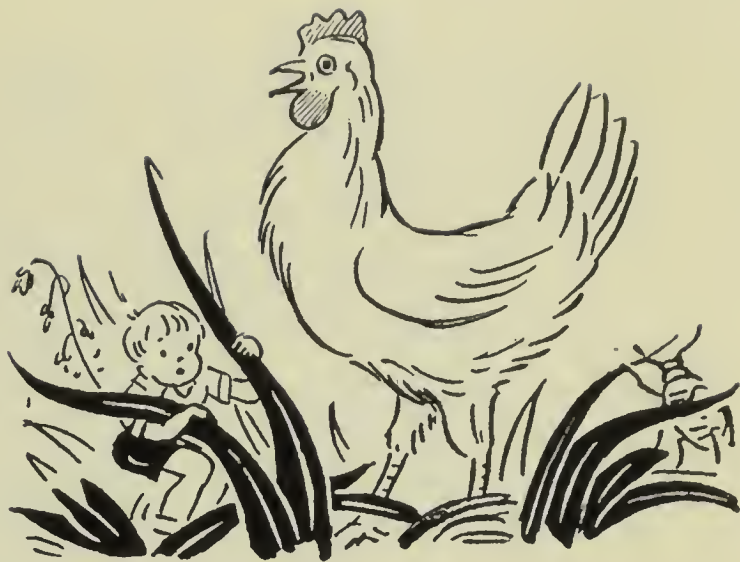
"The blind man with his pencils," said Little Boy. "The lame dog at the cross-roads . . ."

"And your mother? What did you do for your mother to-day?" said Orville. "Something . . . something . . ."

"I told her she was the best dear mother in all the world, and I was sorry I didn't help her more," said Little Boy.

And would you believe it? Little Boy got big, because of his kindness. And he got big enough to shoo that hen.

"Shoo, you!" he said. "Shoo! Leave Orville and all his friends alone. Shoo! Shoo!"



"Cut-cut-cut-cut-a-cut!" said the angry old hen, as she ran cackling to the barnyard, wondering, in the name of all the cornmeal in the pan, since when boys had been allowed to go to bug parties.

A sudden stillness fell over the potato patch. Not a sound could be heard.

It was Bonnie Beetle who broke the silence.

"I'm sorry I said what I did about your friend. I . . . I think little boys are all right. I guess they're just thoughtless when they put bugs in boxes."

Orville winked up at Little Boy. Little Boy winked back and went home, singing: "Happy birthday to you! Happy birthday to you! Happy birthday to every little bug in the world, especially Orville, and this isn't his birthday at all! Happy birthday to you!"

And that's the story of the little box that was paper, the little boy that was nice, and the little bug that was Orville.





Annie McAlpine skipped merrily away, away, away, away. But she'll come back. She always comes back. And it's a good thing she does, for if she didn't, I'd never have known about the stars in her shoes.

When you've stars in your shoes, you can look into pigeons' nests high up in stone church steeples. That's why Annie wanted them so. There was a nest in the stone church at the corner that Annie had never seen inside. She'd been all over the world—away, away, away, and back,—but never once had she seen inside the stone church steeple.

Some people who live in Annie's block just don't understand about going away. I've heard them say many a time: "There goes Annie McAlpine. She's going up to the corner again."

They don't know all the wonderful things that lie between home and the corner. They don't know that the flowers talk. They don't know that the houses smile. They don't know that the wires sing. But Annie does, and so do I, and so do you. But you don't know Annie, do you?



If you want to know where Annie lives, so that you can ask where she goes and goes, just lift the brass knocker on that low white house—the one with the green shutters and

DOCTOR

on the door. The *Doctor* stands for Daddy, you know. And he prescribes for Annie McAlpine, and she does as he says.

"Your eyes are bright, and your lips are red. Your arms are fat, and your legs are strong. Tch, tch, tch . . . you are in very bad shape, Miss Annie, my child," said Doctor Daddy. "You need a trip, and a cookie or two, or maybe three. So you'd best go away to the house next door and see what's in the red jar to-day. And you might say hello to your friends for me, and tell them I'm well and very busy. And now, good-bye." And the doctor kissed her.

And Annie went away . . . away, away, away, away . . . away to Grape Cottage, if you really must know, and it's just next door.

She knew she'd be very welcome there. She could tell by the bell, it rang so happily. It made her laugh, as she waited for her answer. The door swung wide, and she saw her friends.

You must get to know Annie's friends. You'd like them. They are very lovely and very old; and one is Miss Janey, and one is Miss Jeanette. And their dresses are silk, and their aprons are white, and their jar is very full of cookies. But best of all, they know the fairies. Annie McAlpine told me so. Without them, she'd never have had stars in her shoes.

"Janey, look who's here," said little Miss Jeanette. "It's Annie McAlpine that's on our step."

"Good-morning, Miss Janey and Miss Jeanette," said the little girl. "I've had a . . . a . . . a consultation with the doctor."

"My, my, my!" said Miss Janey and Miss Jeanette. "I hope it's nothing serious."

"He said that I should have a cookie or two, or maybe three, and he has ordered me away, away, but I'll come back."

"Yes, do come back," said Miss Jeanette.

Miss Janey's hand was now out of the bright red jar. Three cookies smiled with their raisin lips, and Annie thanked the little old ladies, and off she went . . . away, away.

She stopped near the churchyard, and she talked very low. "I must be still near the House of God,"



she told the old rector who was working near by. "My mummy said I must always be still down by the church."

And the minister said that her mummy was right.

"It's a lovely day in the lovely world, Mr. Preacher Man, isn't it?" said Annie McAlpine. And she talked with the preacher, who was white and bent, and who was making a beautiful flagstone walk.

"Some stones don't fit, I'm sorry to say, and I'm having a time of it, Annie McAlpine," said the man of the church.

"It's 'cause some are round and some are square, and they won't go together," said the little girl.

"That's the way with the world, my child," said the preacher. "And where are you going to-day, Annie?"

"There's not much left, to tell you the truth," said Annie McAlpine. "I've seen most everything." And she stared at the sky, and she winked at a cloud, and she tossed the sand about with her toes.

"Have you seen the snail under my back step?" asked the preacher.

"Yes, I lifted the board and saw his home. It was dark and cold under the plank, but he liked it there. He told me so," said Annie.





"That's because it's his home," said the kindly old preacher. And then he went on: "What of the snake in the green garden next door, Annie? Have you seen it?"

"Yes," said Annie McAlpine. "We've played together. And do you know what? I can crawl the way he does, but he can't walk the way I do. And we had fun. I call him Willie."

And the old minister laughed and began thinking of where Annie McAlpine might go away. He scratched his chin, and he scratched his head, and he rolled his eyes, and he walked up and down.

"There must be some place left in the world that a child could visit this afternoon," he said. "Now let me see . . . just let me see . . ."

And Annie McAlpine held her breath. She knew about the pigeon's nest, but it was in the steeple, and the steeple was in the sky just a bit this side of heaven.

"But of course I couldn't ever see it. Or could I, do you suppose?" she asked the smiling old man.

"Oh, it's easy enough to see, Annie, if you're lucky enough to have them," said the preacher.

"Have what?" asked Annie McAlpine.

"Why, didn't you know?" said the minister man. "If you've stars in your shoes."

"Stars in my shoes?" said a wide-eyed Annie. "But how do I get them?"

"That I don't know," said the old man.

"Oh! Oh, but you must! Or how did you know? Oh, you must know!" said Annie.

"But I don't," said her friend.

"Well, Daddy'll know, but he's so busy. Oh, what shall I do?"

And then Annie McAlpine began to laugh, and she laughed, and she laughed. And she sat down on the curb, and she laughed again. And the sparrow laughed, and the old work horse on the street laughed merrily too. And then Annie McAlpine laughed some more.

"Miss Janey and Miss Jeanette, of course! They'll know. They know everything. They know the fairies, and they have cookies in their jars. Good-bye, Mr. Preacher," and Annie McAlpine was away, away, away . . . back to Grape Cottage with its laughing bell.

"Sakes alive and alack a-day! Annie McAlpine's back again. Janey, the jar!" said Miss Jeanette. "Quick, quick! The child is gaunt and weak with hunger. She needs nourishment, don't you see?"

"I do, indeed," said Annie McAlpine. "But most of all, I need stars in my shoes."

Miss Janey looked at Miss Jeanette, and they nodded their pretty white heads together.

"It's the pigeon's nest, eh, Annie McAlpine?" said Miss Jeanette. And Annie nodded her head.

They understood. She knew they would.

"Yes," said Annie, and she told them what the preacher had said, as he matched his flagstones down by the church. "He doesn't know how I'll get stars in my shoes, and my daddy's busy. So do you know, please, Miss Janey? Miss Jeanette?"

"I did know once," said Miss Jeanette, "what one must do to get stars in her shoes. Have you buttoned shoes, Annie McAlpine? They're very important . . . a pair of buttoned shoes."

"Oh, yes, I've buttoned shoes," said Annie.

"Well, you must set the shoes in a fairy lane, and you must sing the fairy song. It goes like this:

*Blue apples grow on silver trees,
Red lemons grow on gold ones,
Green oranges grow on . . ."*

She stopped. "I forget it, Annie. I plain forget it," she said.

"Oh, Miss Jeanette!"

Annie slipped from Miss Jeanette's knee, where she had perched to learn the song, and ran to Miss Janey.

"You remember it, don't you, Miss Janey? Don't you?" she asked.

Miss Janey sang:

*"Blue apples grow on silver trees,
Red lemons grow on gold ones,
Green oranges grow on candy canes . . ."*

Oh, dear! Oh, dear! and *I* forget it."

It was too bad for Annie McAlpine. She didn't know what to do or sing, and every bit of skip went right out of her dancing toes.

"Don't be discouraged, Annie, my dear," said little Miss Janey. "We do know where's the fairy lane, and we'll remember that song before morning. So I'll tell you what to do."

Annie stood very still to listen.

"Leave the buttoned shoes on the garden path, half-way between the crocus and the hollyhock, and full in front of the marigold bed. Do that, and I'll promise you there'll be stars in your shoes in the morning. But," said Miss Janey, bending low, "you mustn't tell."

"Not even the sparrows?" whispered Annie McAlpine.

"Not even the sparrows."

And that was hard, so Annie McAlpine went to bed so early that night that the sunset missed her cheery good-night. But she couldn't help it. It was a special night, and her lips must sleep so they wouldn't tell.

And morning came, and so did the milkman. He saw the buttoned shoes just full of stars, and he looked and looked. He just couldn't believe it, and he was still looking when Annie McAlpine came out to see.

"Annie," he said, "there are stars in your shoes."

"Oh! Oh!" cried Annie.

And the milkman helped her step into the buttoned shoes, and he watched her going away . . . away,





away, away, . . . to the pigeon's nest in the steeple. But no one else saw her . . . except the birds, and the work horse, who'd already begun his weary day.

And Annie peeked into the pigeon's nest, and she saw many things. She saw Mrs. Pigeon and wee pigeons three. She saw the tiny white range in the tiny white kitchen. She saw the pigeon radio and heard pigeon tunes. She saw the pigeons' book-shelf and their books of nursery rhymes. She saw all these things, 'cause she'd stars in her shoes.

And back on the porch of the low white house—yes, the one with the green shutters—stood Doctor Daddy. He was watching the now fast-rising sun, and he saw the milkman.

"I'm looking for Annie McAlpine," he said.

"She's got stars in her shoes," the milkman said.

"Or did you know?" And the milkman winked.

"She's gone away . . . away, away, and away."

"But she'll be back," said Doctor Daddy. "She always comes back."



"All right for you, Daniel, all right for you!" said Nancy Ann to her fat black cat. Nancy was nibbling a piece of cheese. Daniel was dozing lazily at her feet. "All right for you, Mr. Pussy Cat! If you won't *learn* the song and you won't *sing* the song, you might anyway *listen* to the song. For, Daniel, you should be the very proudest cat in the whole world, because do you know something? No one in the whole world ever heard this song before. I haven't even heard it myself, for I haven't made it up yet. But I'm going to right now."

The jack-o'-lantern on the window-sill grinned at Nancy Ann. He liked her. Everybody liked her.

Jack looked at Daniel, who slowly turned his sleepy green eyes on the little girl to watch her as she sang her song that had never been sung before:

*"I have a great big, little cat.
His name is Danny Panny.
He likes to play with great big me.
My name is Nanny Annie.*

How do you like that, Danny Panny? How do you like your new name? How do you like my new name, Nanny Annie? Nobody in the world knows we've got new names but you and me. How do you like . . . Oh, Daniel, you've gone to sleep, most likely to dream of that mouse, Lemuel Longtail! Oh, dear! But he heard the song, Mr. Jack O'Lantern, didn't he?"

Mr. Jack O'Lantern grinned, "Yes." He could tell by the smile on Daniel's face.

"All right for you, Daniel Cat, all right for you!" said Nancy again. "I'll find someone else to play with, and I'll go adventuring without you. I'll have fun, and you'll be sorry."

But she never dreamed just how sorry he would be, and she never dreamed that it was all going to happen because she went adventuring with a piece of cheese in her hand. She liked cheese, and as she nibbled it, she sat down to make her plans.

Lemuel Longtail, the mouse, was making plans at the same time, and so was his grandmother. Grandmother Longtail was paring pie paste for her Halloween party when the most delightful perfume floated through her cellar home. She put down her paring knife, and she sniffed the air. She was an old, old mouse, but she had a very good nose.

"Lemmy," she called, "Lemmy, I smell cheese, and you told me there wasn't a bit to be had in the house."

"Well, Grandma, there isn't." Grandmother Longtail looked at him. "I mean, Grandma, I can't get at it. It's all in a big glass dish under a lid, and I'm not an elephant."

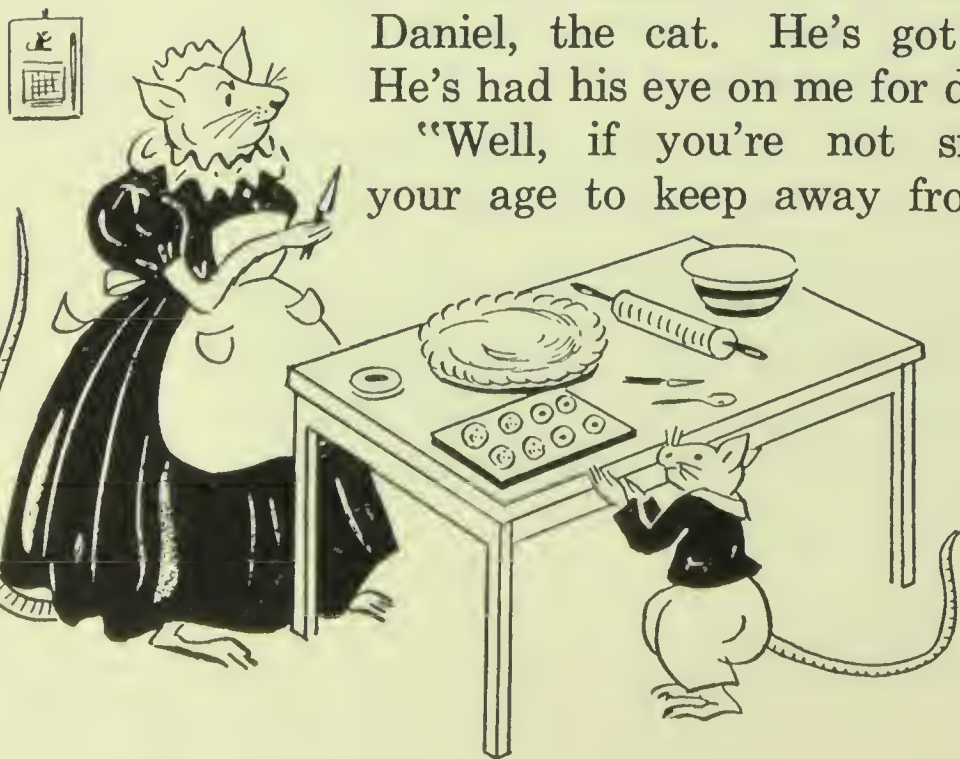
"You're not even a mouse. When I was your age, I found ways to get cheese, no matter where or how. And if I were able to climb that cellar wall to-day, I'd still find a way."

"Well, Grandma, we have pie and cakes and pumpkin rind and apple cores. What more do you want for a Hallowe'en party?"

"Cheese! That's what I want. Cheese!" said Grandmother, her long tail swaying to and fro in her rage. "The cheese can't all be covered up, because I smell it. And you'd best get it for me, or I'll . . ."

"I'll . . . I'll get it for you, Grandma," said Lemmy. "I'll get it, but I don't know how." He sniffled into his whiskers. "I'll likely get killed by Daniel, the cat. He's got his eye on me. He's had his eye on me for days, too."

"Well, if you're not smart enough at your age to keep away from that cat, you deserve to be killed. Now follow that cheese and bring it home."



"Yes, ma'am," said Lemuel Longtail.
The unhappy Lemmy scaled the cellar wall, climbed over the cellar sill, crept out on the dead grape-vine branch, and scampered over the pebbles, only to find that the cheese he wanted was in the hands of a little girl. And the little girl was Nancy Ann.

As she nibbled, she sang:

*"I have a great big, little cat.
His name is Danny Panny.
He likes to play with great big me.
My name is Nanny Annie.
I have a great big piece of cheese . . ."*

She stopped. She saw Lemmy Longtail.

"Hello, little mouse," said Nancy Ann. "What's your name? Where did you come from, and what do you want?"

Lemmy Longtail gasped. She seemed a nice little girl, and she couldn't catch him . . . he was sure of that. He wondered where Daniel was. He didn't see him anywhere about, and he must get that cheese.

"My name's Lemuel Longtail. I live in the cellar, and I want that cheese."

"Well, I like that!" said Nancy Ann. "I think you're very bold. Why . . . why, you didn't even say *please*."

"Oh!" said Lemmy. "I forgot. Please, I want the cheese. I must have it. Please give it to me now, please."

Nancy Ann held the piece of cheese high above her.



"Well, I won't give it to you," she said. "I want it, too. I like it, too, and I'm going to keep it, too. And if you don't go away, I'll call Daniel, and he'll make you go."

The little mouse sank to the ground. He fumbled for his handkerchief, but he couldn't find it, so he wiped his now fear-filled eyes with a grape-vine leaf.

"I guess you don't understand, Nancy Ann," he sobbed. "I've got to have that cheese. My grandmother's having a Hallowe'en party, and if I don't take her that cheese, she'll spank me."

Nancy Ann laughed merrily. This was fun. She was glad now that Daniel was asleep. She'd never talked with a mouse before, especially one that was going to have a party.

"You must have a funny grandmother," said Nancy, "if she'll spank you just because I want to keep my own cheese."

"But she wants it for her party, I tell you," went on the desperate little Lemmy. "Mice always have cheese at their parties. She smelled yours, and she told me to bring it to her."

"Oh, she did, did she? Well, she won't get it."

"She'll tie my tail in knots, then," said Lemmy.

A mouse tear splashed on the little girl's toe. She felt suddenly a little sad for Lemmy.

"Oh, she wouldn't tie knots in your tail, would she?" she said.

"Yes, she would—a thousand hundred knots."

"Oh, that must be terrible!" thought Nancy Ann.

"But," she said to Lemmy, "it's not my fault if she



does tie your tail in knots, and why should I give my cheese away to a party that I'm not even invited to?"

Lemmy's sharp eyes glistened. Grandmother had said *she* could find a way. Well, *he* could find a way, too. He'd invite Nancy Ann to come to the party and bring her cheese. And he did.

"Of course I'll come," said Nancy Ann. This was real adventure. "And I'll bring enough cheese for all the mice in the world, too."

Lemmy was sure that all the cheese in the world was in that glass dish.

"Can you lift the lid?" he asked the little girl.

"Of course. I lifted it to get this piece, didn't I? And I can bring the cheese, but I have to have an invitation on a card with my name, Nancy Angela Herbin, on it."

"I'll get it for you," said Lemmy, and he sat down now on the grape-vine leaf to think.

"If I let her come, we'll have the cheese," he said to himself, "and I won't get my tail tied into knots. She's a nice little girl, and she wouldn't hurt us, but she'd scare all the guests away from the party. But if I lent her a mouse's suit, they'd never know she was a girl, if she'd keep still and not talk." He looked at Nancy Ann, who was still holding the piece of cheese high above her. "You can come to the party, Nancy Ann, if you'll wear a mouse's suit, and keep still."

Nancy Ann screamed with delight. "Of course I'll wear a mouse's suit. Of course I'll keep still."

Nancy ran up the steps for cheese. Lemmy ran down the steps for the invitation and the mouse suit. And in less than no time they met again.

Nancy zipped herself into the little gray mouse suit, she straightened her whiskers and flicked her tail, and she laughed aloud as she followed Lemmy. She had been as good as her word. Lemmy was staggering under the weight of the cheese.

Grandmother was waiting.

"You've done very well, Lemmy," she said. "This is more cheese than was ever seen in Mouseland." And she looked at Nancy with a question in her eyes.

"This is a friend of mine," gulped Lemmy. "She . . . she's so full of cheese, she can't talk."

"You shouldn't be so greedy, my dear," said Grandmother Longtail. "But come along!"

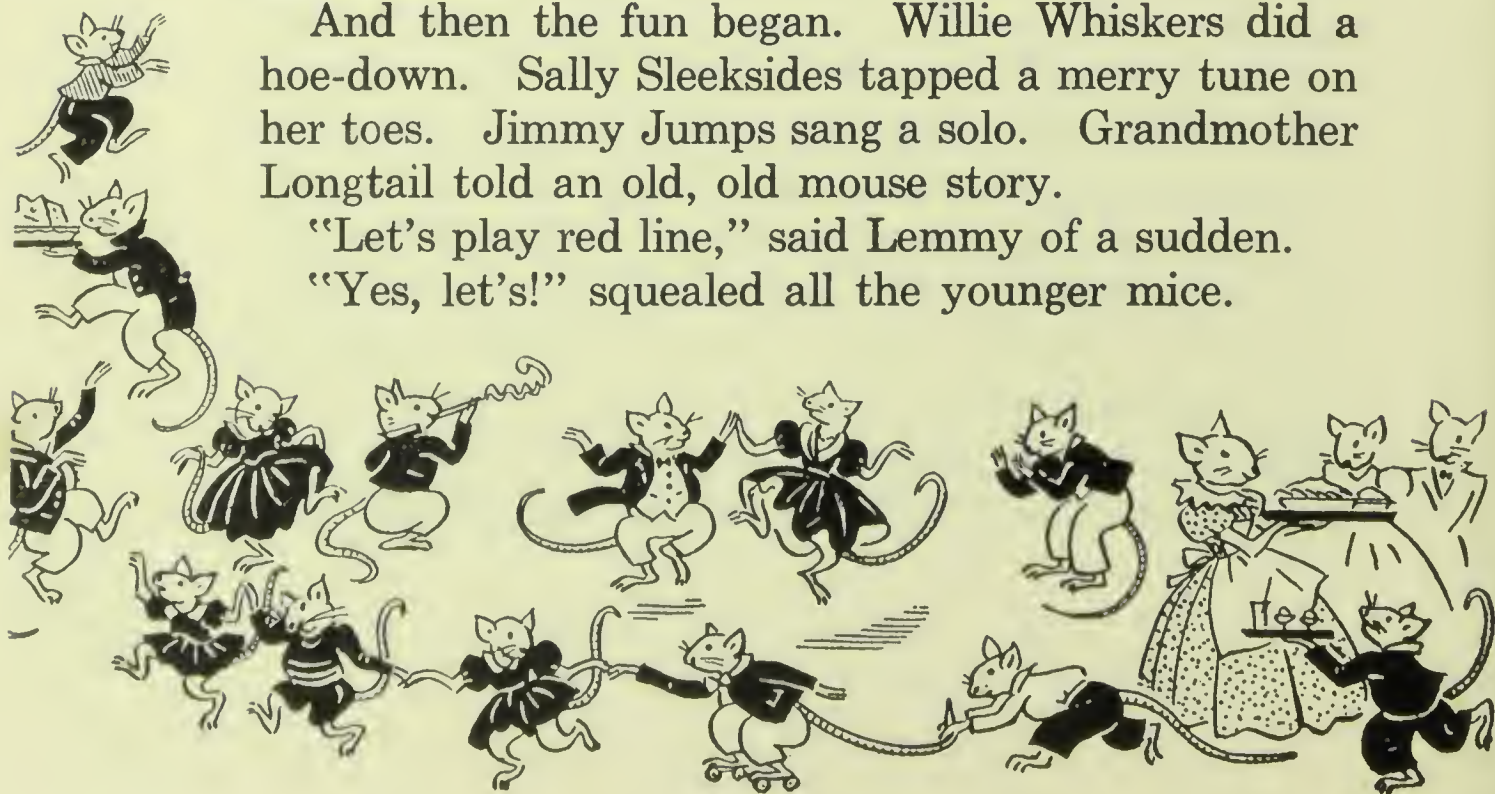
"Oh!" said Nancy. "Oh! *Mice!*"

All the mice in the world were there, it seemed. They screamed with delight when they saw the cheese, and they licked their lips, and they flicked their tails.

And then the fun began. Willie Whiskers did a hoe-down. Sally Sleekslides tapped a merry tune on her toes. Jimmy Jumps sang a solo. Grandmother Longtail told an old, old mouse story.

"Let's play red line," said Lemmy of a sudden.

"Yes, let's!" squealed all the younger mice.





Well, what a din! You could hear the rumble from the attic to the cellar, and of course it reached the ears of the dozing Daniel, who still lay sleeping on the floor above.

Daniel opened his eyes. He sat up. He stood up. "Mice!" he miewed. "A Hallowe'en party, eh? Well, I'll soon fix that."

Putting on his velvet slippers, he tiptoed to the cellar door, and down, down, down he went.

"Mice, hundreds of them, and playing red line," he said to himself.

He laughed, and Grandma—sharp old Grandma—heard him. And then she saw him, and then she screamed: "*Daniel!* The cat! Run for your lives!"

And they ran—here, there, into cracks, into mouse-holes, into ash-cans, or up on rafters.

Nancy ran too—up and down, round about. She didn't know what to do. She couldn't find a hole big enough. She couldn't unzip the zipper. And Daniel was coming straight towards her.

This wasn't the Daniel she knew, but a *cat* after a mouse. His velvet slippers had been thrown aside, and his claws were sharp, and his tail was getting bigger every minute.

"Daniel, Daniel!" Nancy cried. "Daniel, don't scratch me! Don't, don't! It's Nancy Ann! I've got a mouse suit on."

Daniel smiled wickedly.

"Don't try to fool me, Lemmy Longtail. I know your tricks." And he tossed Nancy Angela into the air.

She fell with a thud on the cellar floor.

"Oh, Daniel! I'm not Lemmy Longtail. I've got his suit on, that's all. I'm Nancy, I tell you."

Again he tossed her into the air.

"Nancy Angela is my little girl," he said as she fell, "and I love her. She's not a mouse. She's nice and pretty." And he tossed her up again.

This time she landed in the coal heap. He leaped towards her.

"Danny, Danny, don't do it again. Oh, Danny Panny, Danny Panny!" And she thought of her song—the song that only she and Daniel out of the whole world knew,—so she sang breathlessly:

"I have a great big, little cat.

His name is Danny Panny . . ."

"Miew, miew," said Daniel, the cat. "Miew." And he put on his velvet slippers again, and he unzipped the zipper of Lemmy's gray suit. "Miew. I'm so sorry. I'm so sorry, Nancy Ann."

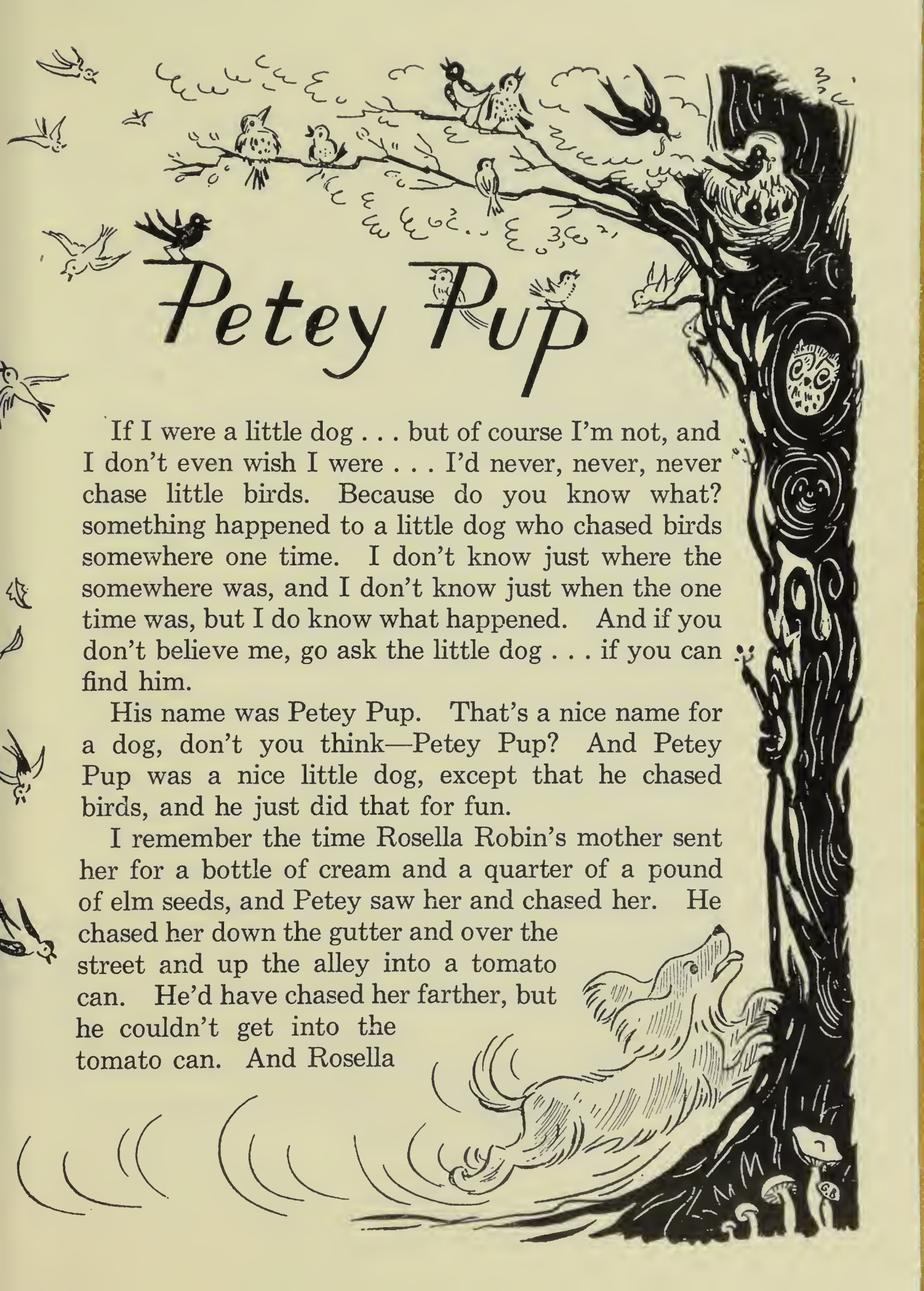
And he licked the bruises on her little face, and he licked the coal-dust from her hair.

Nancy Ann smiled.

"It's all right, Daniel. You didn't know, and after all, you *are* a cat. And anyway, I shouldn't have gone adventuring without you. But it was fun, and it will be nice to tell people I went to a mouse party. I wonder if people will believe me, though. Oh, Daniel, I bet they won't."

Well, I believe her, don't you?



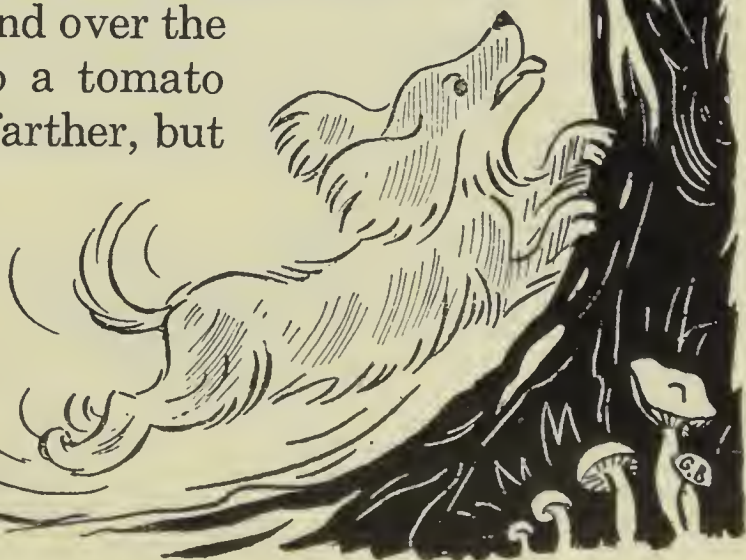


Petey Pup

If I were a little dog . . . but of course I'm not, and I don't even wish I were . . . I'd never, never, never chase little birds. Because do you know what? something happened to a little dog who chased birds somewhere one time. I don't know just where the somewhere was, and I don't know just when the one time was, but I do know what happened. And if you don't believe me, go ask the little dog . . . if you can find him.

His name was Petey Pup. That's a nice name for a dog, don't you think—Petey Pup? And Petey Pup was a nice little dog, except that he chased birds, and he just did that for fun.

I remember the time Rosella Robin's mother sent her for a bottle of cream and a quarter of a pound of elm seeds, and Petey saw her and chased her. He chased her down the gutter and over the street and up the alley into a tomato can. He'd have chased her farther, but he couldn't get into the tomato can. And Rosella



spilled the cream all over her good red vest, and her mother spanked her right on the tail with a pussy-willow. Rosella cried and said it was all Petey's fault. But Petey didn't care. He'd found a fat chicken in the barnyard to chase.

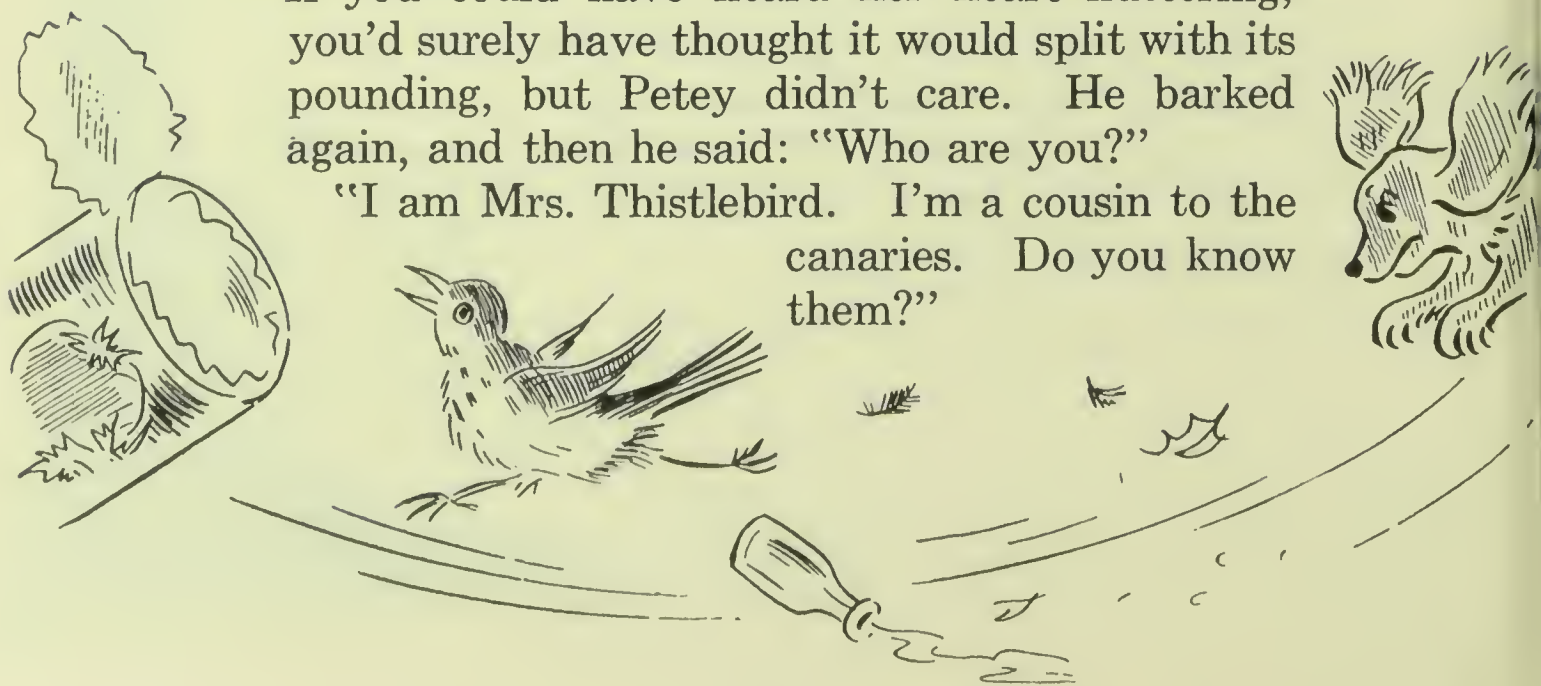
Once when he was chasing a hen, he made a mistake, for it was a rooster. And Mr. Rooster turned and said: "Oh, you would, would you?" And he chased Petey instead.

And then there came a day when Mrs. Thistlebird moved into the orchard near the garden. She brought her little yellow family with her. They were so pretty that they looked like little golden flowers against the blue of the sky.

The lilacs and the larkspur, the pinks and the pansies, and even cross Mrs. Snapdragon loved them. The bees gave them honey, and the roses gave perfume, and the little thistlebirds were as happy as the sun in the sky . . . that is, until they met Petey Pup.

Petey cocked his saucy little head to one side, and then he cocked it to the other, and then he barked, "Bow-wow!" just like that, right at Mrs. Thistlebird. If you could have heard her heart fluttering, you'd surely have thought it would split with its pounding, but Petey didn't care. He barked again, and then he said: "Who are you?"

"I am Mrs. Thistlebird. I'm a cousin to the canaries. Do you know them?"





"Yes, of course I know them," said Petey, importantly. "And I don't like them, because they're in a cage, and I can't chase them. I chase birds. Didn't you know? I'm a bird-chaser, I am. I'm the best bird-chaser in the whole garden."

Mrs. Thistlebird's heart again pounded furiously.

"You . . . you wouldn't chase my children, would you?" she asked.

"Yes, I would," said Petey, importantly.

"But my children are so small, they'd be frightened."

"Sure they would," said Petey. "'Cause do you know why? I scare birds, I do. I even scare crows. I'm a scarecrow, I am." And the little dog laughed at his great joke.

And he laughed so loudly and so long that Mrs. Thistlebird flew to her nest. She gathered her little ones about her, and told them to stay close in the nest yard, or perhaps Petey Pup would get them.

Petey sat down in the orchard to scratch his silky ear (a flea had come to visit him), and he said to himself: "Juicy bone and jumping kitty cats! I should have told Mrs. Thistlebird that I'm only in fun. I should have told her I wouldn't *hurt* her children. Oh, well, I'll tell her the next time I chase her."

Dark clouds were gathering above, but Petey didn't seem to notice them.

"I think now I'd better go down and take Desdemona Duck a few crumbs because . . ."

"Is Desdemona sick?" asked the flea that Petey was scratching in his silky ear.

"No, she's not sick . . . she's hurt," said Petey. "A boy threw a stone and broke her wing, and she can't move around very much. But I took her a couple of good stout sticks, and Builder Beaver is hewing her out a crutch, so's she can get around, and . . ."

"And now you're taking her crumbs. You're not so bad, Petey Pup."

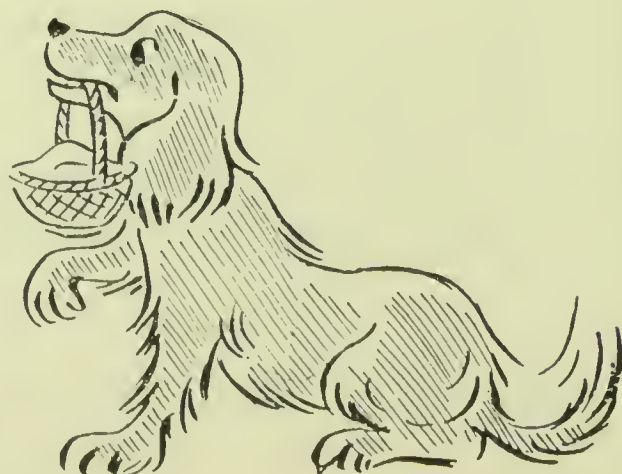
"Oh, yes, I am . . . I'm bad. I'm a bird-chaser, I am. I'm a scarecrow." And Petey laughed again.

"Well, you'll be wet, too, if you don't run home," said the flea, leaping from Petey's ear to his tail. "Just look at those clouds. They're ready to break any minute."

He was right—they broke right there and then.

Petey dashed towards the woodland next to the orchard that was near the garden, and he found shelter under a great pine tree.

He liked the rain. It chased the sun the way he chased the birds. He liked to see it beating the trees. He liked to see it spattering about him.



He liked that big red toadstool over there. It looked like an earthy umbrella, and under it sat the queerest little creature Petey had ever seen. It had a beautiful face like that of a beautiful boy. It had the sleek green body of a tulip newly in bloom. It had an odd wee tasselled cap set jauntily over one ear, and it had wings . . . yes, *wings!*



"It must be a bird," said Petey Pup. "Yes, it must be a bird. It's got wings! I'll chase it. Bow-wow, little bird, bow-wow! I'm going to chase you, I am."

The tiny fellow put his tiny green arms about the deep red stem of the toadstool.

"Oh, go away! Go away! I'm not a bird. I'm a fairy," he said, "and I got caught in a shower."

"A fairy?" said Petey. "I don't know what a fairy is. You're a bird. You can't fool me. You're a bird, because you have wings. And I'm a bird-chaser, I am."

The fairy broke away from the toadstool, and he ran and screamed: "Help! Help!"

The bluebells took up the cry. "Help! Help!" they rang out.

And the brownies heard, and the goblins. The elfins heard, and the water-sprites. And they all came flying to the little fairy's aid—from the rock crannies, from the flower-cups, from the lily-pads,

from the sea-shells—until the whole woodland was alive with the little folk.

"What is it, Bonnie?" they asked when they gathered around the helpless little fellow.

"Oh, it's . . . it's that great black thing, with the big voice," said the fairy. "He . . . he's chasing me, and I'm afraid."

All eyes fell on Petey Pup.

"What is he?" said a goblin.

"He's a bird-chaser," said the frightened fairy.

"No, he isn't," said Mrs. Thistlebird. "He's a scarecrow. He told me only a little while ago that he was a scarecrow."

"A scarecrow, eh?" said a strong, stout brownie. "I know what that is. That's a good name for him, and that's what he's going to be. Come on!"

Petey was frightened now, as they all closed in on him. He looked excitedly for some means of getting away, but he could find no escape.

They seized him. They pinned him to the earth with thorns from the rose. They made a funny hat of cowslips, and they put it on his head.

"Let me go! Let me go!" squealed Petey.

From the bark of a cherry tree they made a ragged coat, and then they laughed at him and called: "Oh, oh, oh, oh! Petey is a scarecrow. Oh, oh, oh! Petey is a scarecrow. Come and see, come and see, come and see the scarecrow."

And birds came one by one. Rosella Robin nipped his nose. Willie Woodpecker tapped at his tail. The humming-bird buzzed in his left ear until Petey



thought he could stand it no longer, and he cried out: "Stop . . . oh, please stop!"

"Humph!" said a song-sparrow, as she sat on his eyebrow. "You didn't stop when we asked you to stop. I remember very well the day that you chased me into the cow-shed. The horse nearly stepped on me."

"That was the barn, Sandy Sparrow, not the cow-shed, and I only did it for fun," said Petey.

"Fun!" said the redbird from her perch on Petey's shoulder. "I didn't think it was fun the day you nearly chased me into the jaws of that old yellow cat who lives at the farmhouse."

"I wouldn't have let her get you, Redbird. Honestly, I wouldn't," sobbed Petey. "I'm not a bad little dog, really I'm not."

"Prove it," said a water-sprite, hanging from a raindrop. "Prove it."

"I . . . I . . . How can I prove it?" said Petey.

And there really was no way.

It was the flea who saved Petey's life. He leaped from Petey's saucy turned-up tail, and made a flea-line to the pond and to Desdemona Duck.

"It's Petey, Desdemona, Petey," said the flea. "The fairies have got him. The birds are torturing him. They've made a scarecrow out of him."

"A scarecrow, indeed!" and Desdemona shook herself indignantly. "I'd be dead to-day if it weren't for Petey Pup. Give me that crutch, Mr. Beaver. I'll settle them. Scarecrow indeed!"

Crippling along at top speed went Desdemona Duck, right into the middle of the fairy ring, quacking with all her might.

"Leave him alone, you sillies," she said. "He's the best little dog in the whole outdoors."

Petey sobbed gratefully.

"He saved my life," said the duck. "I'd have starved if it hadn't been for him. He brought me bread-crumbs, and he brought me wood for my crutch. Let him go, I tell you! Let him go!"

And the birds and the fairies and the elves and the water-sprites stood still and stared at Desdemona in her fury.

Then they spoke: "Well, he . . . he chased us. Didn't he ever chase you, Desdemona?"

"Yes, he did, lots of times," said Dessy. "But he didn't hurt me."

Rosella's face fell.

"Did he ever hurt you, Rosy?" went on the duck.

"No, but he . . . well . . ."

"Well, I don't think he should chase us anyway," said Betty Bluebird.

"Neither do I," said Desdemona. "Neither do I. But he's young. He doesn't know any better. And he won't do it any more. Will you, Petey?" she added, looking straight at the sobbing puppy dog.

"No, no, I won't do it any more. I won't ever, ever chase birds again. But," he said bewilderedly, "what *will* I chase?"

"Chase other puppy dogs," said Desdemona. "Chase other little dogs."

"All right," said Petey, and away he went down the road.

If I were a puppy dog, I'd go with him just for the fun of it. But I'm not, and I don't even wish I were one. Do you?





Jack and Benny Bunny

The jack-in-the-box was at the market—a queer place for a jack-in-the-box to be, don't you think? But it was the Christmas market, and anybody's likely to be there. Anyway, Jack liked the market. He liked the smell of the Christmas wreaths as they lay in the bottom of the farm wagons. He liked the eggs and the butter and the cranberries and the turkeys. He liked the tinkle of the sleigh-bells, as the restless horses tossed weary heads and dreamed of soft hay and warm barns. He liked the market.

"But *why* do I have to stay in a box?" he grumbled. "I want to get out and tumble in the snow. I want to get out and walk among people. I want to get out and run in the woods. I'm tired of being shut in."

And Jack strained so hard on his hinges, and he strained so hard on his lid, that the box creaked and shivered suddenly.

"What have you got in that red box, Jim?" said a neighbouring farmer. "Chickens?"

"No," said Farmer Brown. "That's a jack-in-the-box. I bought it this afternoon for Billy. I gave it to him for a Christmas present."

"It sounds as if it was trying to get away from you," said the neighbour.

The two men laughed merrily as they made their sleds ready for the homeward trip. They checked over the groceries, took the blankets from the backs of the horses, shoved the feed bags under the seat, and with a "Merry Christmas" to everyone turned their homeward way.

Jack-in-his-Box huddled in the corner. He shifted his funny, cone-shaped cap from one side of his head to the other, and he put his eye to a crack in his box.

"Um," he said to himself. "We're leaving town, I guess."

He could see the smoke of the city chimneys fading in the distance, and he could no longer hear the roar of the traffic. He could see rows of little Christmas trees growing along the roadside. They stood like soldiers facing the sky. They were trimmed with sparkling snowflakes, with silver icicles and little gray birds. One of the birds flew from his branch to the top of the tree and sang merrily to the setting sun: "Chickadee, chickadee, chickadee."

"Oh, chickadee yourself!" said Jack. "How would you like to be stuck in a box? I might be able to sing too, if I could get out of here."

And he pushed so hard that his nose got longer, and he pushed so hard that his cheeks got fatter, and he pushed so hard that his face got redder, and



he pushed so hard that he pushed himself out of the sled, box and all. And there he lay in a bank of snow.

Now in the nearby woodland lived Mrs. Christina Bunny and her little bunny family. She was a happy young thing, was Mrs. Bunny, and to-day she was humming busily as she tied up the last of her Christmas parcels. She had just this minute put a bunch of violets on a little hat she had made for Mrs. Skunk.

"She'll love the violets," said Mrs. Bunny to Patty, her eldest daughter. "Yes, she'll love them! They have such a delightful perfume, sweet and woodsy."

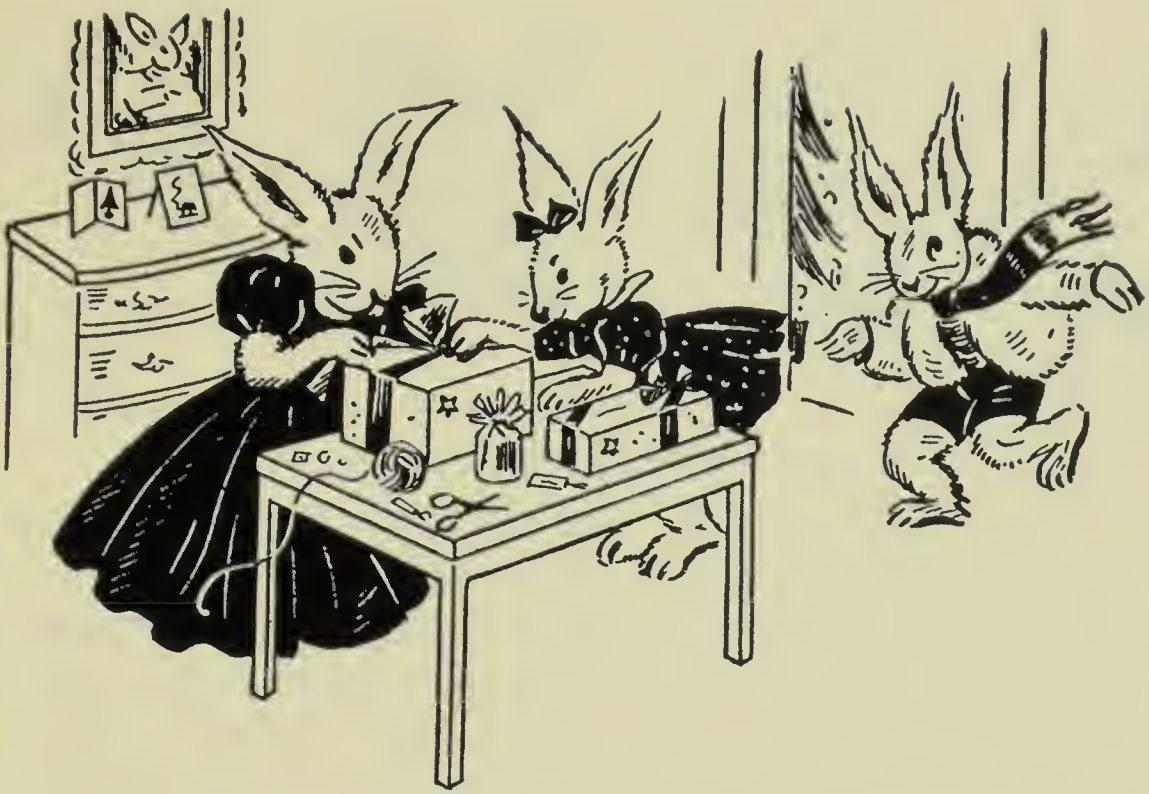
"Mother," said Patty, "Mother, *please* don't ask me to take the bonnet to Mrs. Skunk. I just can't stand it." And Patty turned up her pretty pink nose.

"But, my dear," said Mrs. Christina, "Mrs. Skunk will feel hurt if she doesn't get her present from me. Someone will just have to go, and I'm too weary. It won't take very long, my dear."

"Send Benny then, Mother, please," said Patty, as she looked about for her little brother.

"All right," said Mrs. Christina. "But it's unfair to Mrs. Skunk for you to feel the way you do, Patty. She can't help her perfume."

"I know, Mother," said Patty. "There's Benny, outside, playing hopskotch. Mother, I wish you'd make him stop jumping around so. He landed right on my good blue bedspread this afternoon. He just jumps over everything."



"Oh, my dear," said her mother, "let him alone! He's only young once." And going to the door, she called: "Benny, Benny, come here. Mother wants you to run an errand."

"Oh, Ma, I'm tired of running errands. Send Patty. And besides it's Christmas Eve."

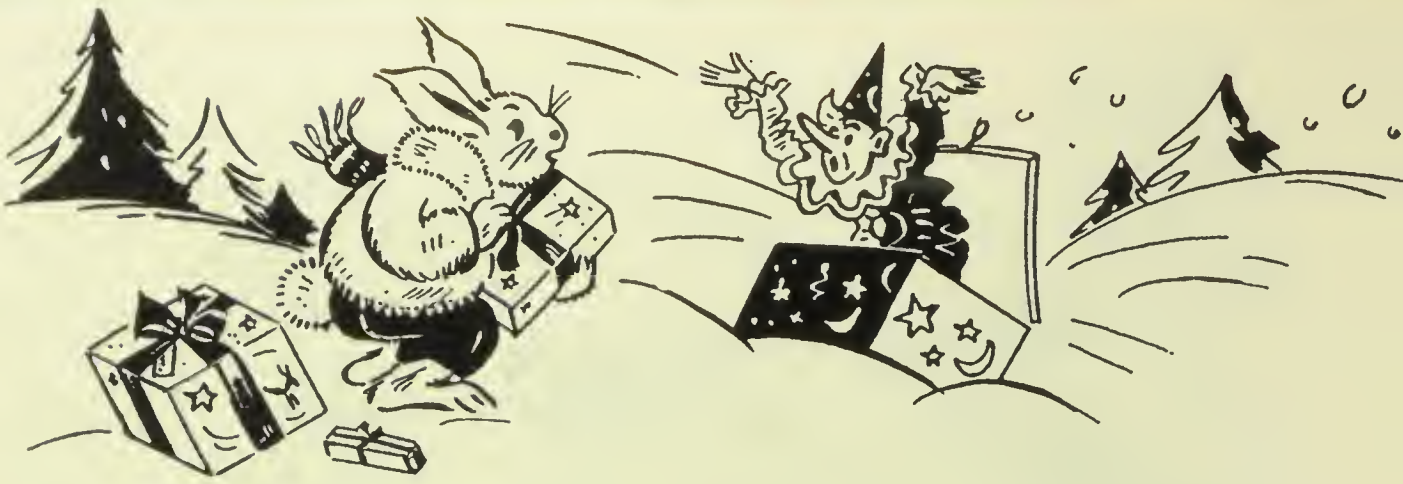
"I know it is. That's why I want you to run the errand. Come, hurry, now," said Mrs. Bunny, as she started putting her presents into a basket.

She straightened Benny's stocking cap, kissed him on the whiskers, and told him to run along.

"And don't jump," said Patty.

"I will so jump. I'll jump all I like. I wish I were a jumping-jack, I do, so I could jump and jump and still be in the same place, and I wouldn't be running errands all the time."

"Benny! I'm surprised at you," said his mother. "Jumping-jack, indeed! A fine jumping-jack you'd make. You wouldn't stay very long in a box."



"Oh, yes, I would. I'd love it. I'd never have to go any place . . . just stay at home and jump in a box. I love boxes . . . just love them," said Benny.

"Well, then, be careful of the one that has Mrs. Skunk's little hat in it," said Mrs. Christina, "for I don't want the violets crushed. They're such lovely violets."

Benny Bunny, loaded down with presents, hopped down the road disgustedly. He jumped over a field mouse. He jumped over a dead twig. He jumped over a tree stump. He jumped over the culvert to where Jack-in-the-Box lay in the snow. And he was just going to jump over Jack when he heard Jack say: "Hi! Wait, Bunny boy, wait. Let me out of here, will you? Let me out."

Benny Bunny was so surprised that he dropped Mrs. Skunk's hat with the violets on it, and he stared at Jack.

"Well, holly berries and Christmas wreaths!" he said. "I was talking about you just before I left home."

"You were?" said Jack. "What were you saying?"

"I was saying I wished I were you. I was saying I'd like to be a jack-in-the-box, and jump and jump and jump and jump, and never run errands."

"Well," said Jack, "let me tell you that you said a very silly thing. I'd much rather be a rabbit and run about in the snow. It's not much of a life living in a box."

"That's what my mother said."

"Well, you should believe your mother. Mothers are always right," said Jack.

"Well, my mother's wrong this time, because I know I want to be a jack-in-the-box. I tell you, Jack. You want to be a rabbit. I want to be a jack. I'll trade places with you."

"You . . . you wouldn't?" said Jack.

"Yes, I would," said Benny. "You give me your frill and cap, and I'll give you my white fur coat."

And before they knew it, Benny was stepping into the box, and Jack was fastening his new white rabbit coat, and Farmer Brown was coming slowly down the road with Billy. They were looking for something.

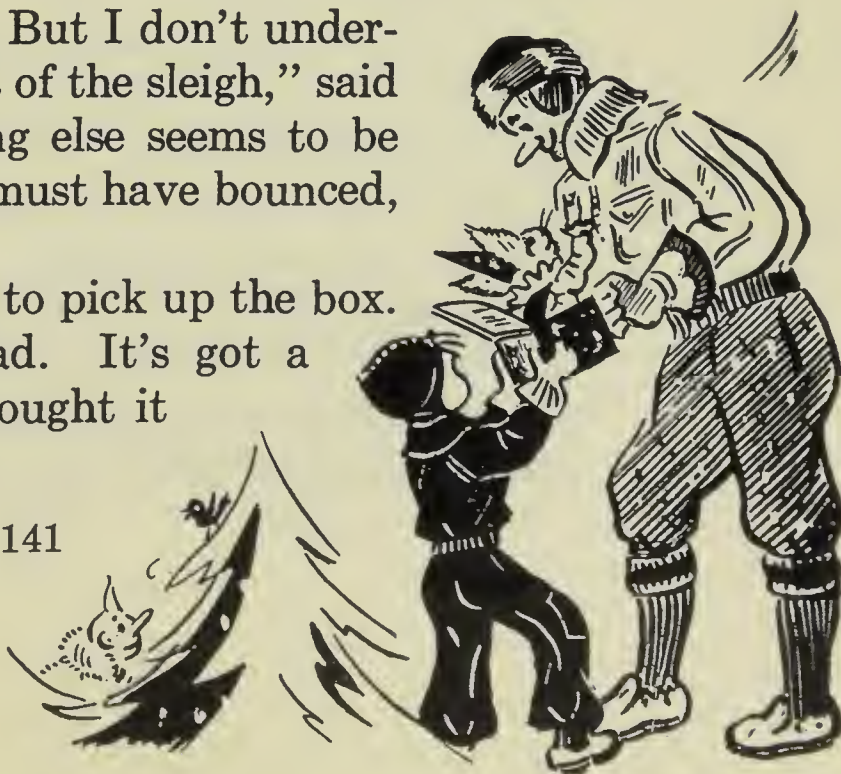
"Hide, Jack! Hide!" said Benny, and he became very still.

"There it is, Daddy, there. I can see the red box," said Billy.

"Right you are, son! But I don't understand how it ever got out of the sleigh," said the farmer. "Everything else seems to be all right. Funny . . . it must have bounced, I guess."

The little boy stooped to pick up the box.

"Why, look at it, Dad. It's got a face like a rabbit. I thought it was a little man."



The farmer looked puzzled for a minute.

"That clerk must have given me the wrong parcel," he said. "The jack I bought had red cheeks and a long nose. That's funny."

"Oh, well, I like him this way just as well," said Billy.

And the little boy snapped down the lid on Benny's head. Snap went the hook on Benny's nose, and his whiskers were caught in the hinges!

"Ouch!" said Benny. "Ouch! I don't know if I'm going to like this. I wish I had a bigger box . . . that's all I need. I can't jump in this small box, and I'll smother besides."

The farmer cracked his whip, and the sleigh slid on towards the farmer's home.

And back on the side of the road, Jack-out-of-the-Box stood proudly in his white fur coat.

"Well," he said happily, "I guess I'd better get Mrs. Bunny's Christmas presents delivered, or I'll not get home to-night."

And it was then, and not until then, that Jack discovered he had no legs. He'd never thought of that before. He'd never needed to walk until this minute. His face became as white as his coat. He was really frightened.

"Oh, what have I done? What have I done? What shall I do?" he cried.

The sun had already set, and it was growing cold. Mother Moon shook her head sadly at the silly jack-out-of-the-box, and the stars tried their best to cheer him with their twinkling.

Back at the Bunny house, little Mrs. Christina twisted her apron nervously.

"What's keeping Benny, I wonder. Oh, I hope nothing has happened to him!"

She had good cause to worry, as you and I know. Something *was* happening, and it wasn't turning out as Benny had expected either.

Billy lifted the lid on the box again, and again snapped it on Benny's head and again caught the hinges in Benny's whiskers.

"Ouch! If he does that again," said Benny, "I'm going to make a run for it. I can never stand this. Um, but that woodland smells good to me! It's so close in here. I'll . . . I'll get out myself."

Benny pushed on the lid. The hook gave way. Benny jumped, and like a flash disappeared in the dying day.

"Upon my word!" said the farmer. "This is the strangest thing. You must have broken the spring, Billy. Well, he can't have gone far. He must be over there by the barn. Jack's not going to get away from us that easily."

But they were wrong. Benny had got away all right. And he was going home, and he was going to tell his mother that she was right, and that now he knew that a box was no place for him.

But he was stopped suddenly by the sobbing of the jack-out-of-the-box. Tears were softly falling into his white rabbit-skin coat.

"Oh, dear! Oh, dear!" he sobbed. "Why did I ever leave my nice warm box? I belong in a box!"



"And I belong in the woods, Jack," said Benny. "We were both silly. Here are your cap and frill," he said, as he slid into his own white coat. "Good-bye, and Merry Christmas!"

"Wait, wait!" cried Jack-out-of-the-Box, in despair. "Wait. Don't leave me. What'll I do? Where'll I go? You wouldn't leave me here in the woods all alone, would you?"

"No, I wouldn't. I'll tell you," said Benny. "You come home with me. My mother is the best mother in all the world. She'll understand. I'll tell her the silly thing we've done. Besides, we're going to have lettuce for dinner to-morrow."

"I don't want lettuce," sobbed Jack. "I never eat. And I can't go with you. I can't even walk."

"Holly berries and Christmas stockings! Neither you can," said Benny. "Well, now, let's see."

Benny put his paw behind his right ear. Benny put his paw behind his left ear. Benny put his paw on his head. And then he had an idea.

"Jack," he said, "you can't walk, but you *can* spring, can't you?"

"Oh, yes, I can spring," said Jack-out-of-the-Box. "No, *I can't*. I need my hinges. I need my hook. I need my lid. I need my box. Oh, why was I ever so

silly? I'd be home safe under Billy's tree if I'd been a wise man." And the tears poured down his frost-bitten cheeks.

"Cheer up, Jack, and listen," said Benny. "I know how we'll work it. You stand there in your box just as steady as you can, and I'll jump on your head."

"What?" said Jack.

"Yes, I'll jump on your head, *hard*. That'll press down the spring, see? And you'll make right for the farmyard—Farmer Brown's barnyard. They'll find you. They're hunting for you right now," said Benny.

"All right, Benny," said Jack, "*jump!* And hurry, before my face cracks."

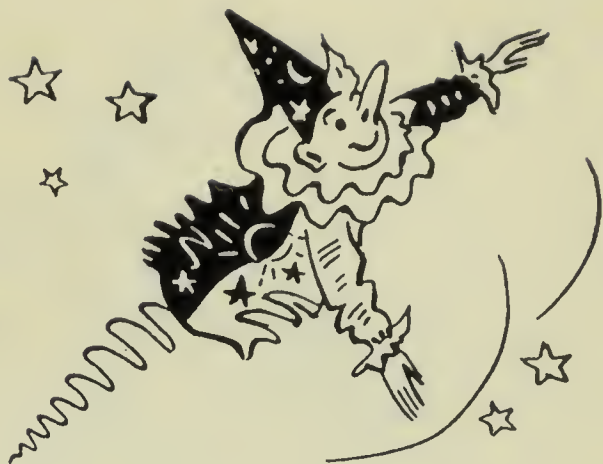
Benny hopped to a tree stump, and with a flying leap he landed full on Jack's head.

Whee-ee! Through the air went Jack like a sky-rocket. He landed at the east corner of the big red barn just two seconds before Farmer Brown and his little boy arrived there.

"I've got him, Dad. I've got him," called Billy. "But . . . but look at his face. He doesn't look like a rabbit now. I must have been dreaming."

"Um," said the farmer. "Um, I'm wondering. I'm wondering."

Well, I'm not. All I'm wondering about is, did little Mrs. Skunk get her Christmas hat with the violets on it?





The little lost reindeer might never have been saved from the snowy storm cloud had not Willie Whitepaws got the shiny shovel for Christmas.

It's a wonder that the chickadee, as he flew chickadeeing through the winter sky, hadn't seen the little reindeer; but he hadn't. It's a wonder that the pine tree, as she stretched and strained in the winter sunlight, hadn't seen him, or Squealer Squirrel, as he leaped from branch to branch; but they hadn't. And it was just by chance that Willie Whitepaws saw him, for Willie is a rabbit, and you know how rabbits are. They just hop and hop and then hop some more, and they've nothing much to do with the sky except to say hello or good-morning. And as I said before, Willie wouldn't have seen him either except for the shiny shovel.

It was a Christmas shovel, and it was red, with the shiniest handle you ever saw. Willie loved that shovel with the loveliest love you've ever heard of.

To-day he was shovelling, not because he had to shovel, but just because he wanted to.

He had on his new wind-breaker. He'd got that for Christmas too. It had a zipper, and as zippers sometimes will, Willie's zipper unzipped and slid down its little railroad track. When Willie zipped it up again, he made the little train go so fast that his hand ran away, and *zip!* he hit himself right on the chin and knocked his face up to see the sky. The next thing he saw was the little lost reindeer.

At first he couldn't believe his own eyes. I can't say I blame him, do you? I'd be surprised too if I were to find a little lost reindeer in the clouds. But the most exciting part of it all was that it was one of Santa Claus's reindeer. And how one of Santa Claus's reindeer came to be alone and struggling to free himself from a storm cloud was just more than Willie Whitepaws could tell.

Well, Willie didn't know what to do except hop, so he hopped and hopped, and then he hopped some more. He dropped his shiny shovel in his excitement.

"What's got into you, Willie?" asked the chickadee. "Is there a flea in your ear?"

"No," said Willie. "But look! Look up there," and he pointed to the sky and towards the west.

"Chickadee-dee-dee," said the bird. And he flew to the top of the pine tree. "Fresh eggs and tail feathers! It's Dancer—Santa Claus's reindeer."

"I know," said Willie.

The chickadee woke the drowsy pine and knocked on Squealer Squirrel's storm door.





"Look! Look!" he said. "See what Willie Whitepaws has found up in the clouds."

"A reindeer!" cried Squealer in surprise.

"It's Dancer," said the pine tree. "How do you suppose this ever happened? I saw Santa Claus on his way home days and days ago."

"Christmas Eve it was," said Willie. "I guess I know that. I hung up my stocking, and boy! oh, boy! did I get presents?" And Willie began to hop again. "I got this wind-breaker, and this cap, and these moccasins, and this wrist-watch (and it goes, too), and some candy (I gave you some, remember, Squealer?), but best of all I got this shovel."

And Willie began to sing:

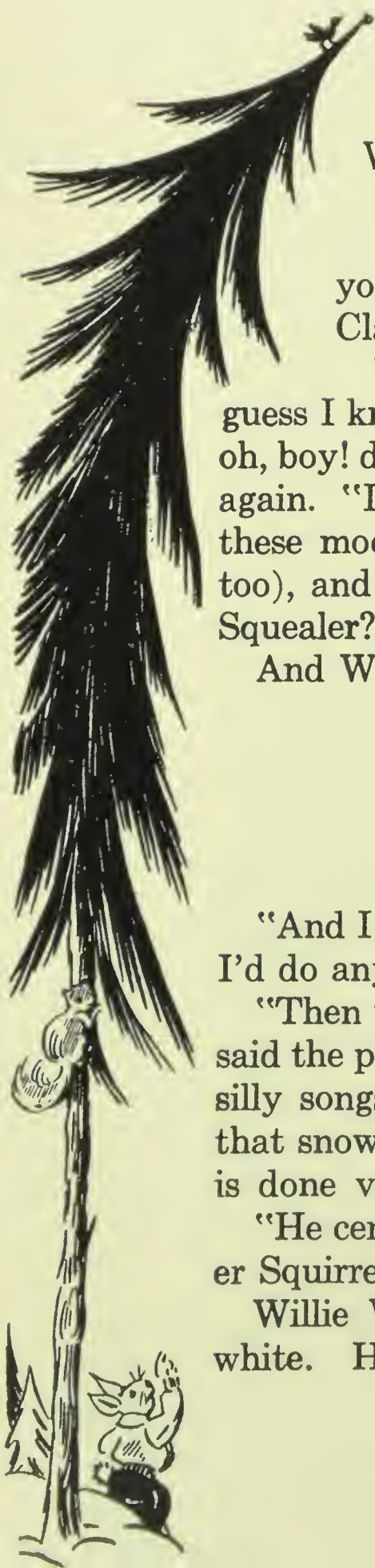
*"I have a little shovel.
It came from Santa Claus.
It's red, and oh, so shiny!
I love it just . . . because."*

"And I love Santa Claus, too," he went on. "And I'd do anything for him . . . yes, sir, just anything."

"Then why don't you save his little lost reindeer," said the pine tree, "instead of hopping around singing silly songs? That little deer is sinking deeper into that snow cloud every minute, and unless something is done very soon, he'll die."

"He certainly will," said the chickadee and Squealer Squirrel.

Willie Whitepaw's face now became whiter than white. He sat right down, and he looked straight up.



"Yes, Pine Tree, you're right. I ought to be ashamed to be thinking just of myself. Somebody's got to save that deer, and that somebody is Willie Whitepaws. But how'll I get up there?"

That the pine tree didn't know, nor did the chickadee, nor Squealer Squirrel.

"There must be some way," said Willie. "And I'll need my shovel when I get there. Now let me think. I can think best when I'm hopping."

So he hopped through the underbrush, and he hopped through the thorn thicket. And just as he was hopping back to the pine tree, he had an idea.

"I can get there," he cried. "I can get there. I can save him if you'll all help me."

"Of course we'll all help," said the chickadee and the pine tree and Squealer Squirrel.

"Well, then," said Willie, "Pine Tree, you bend down your longest, strongest branch."

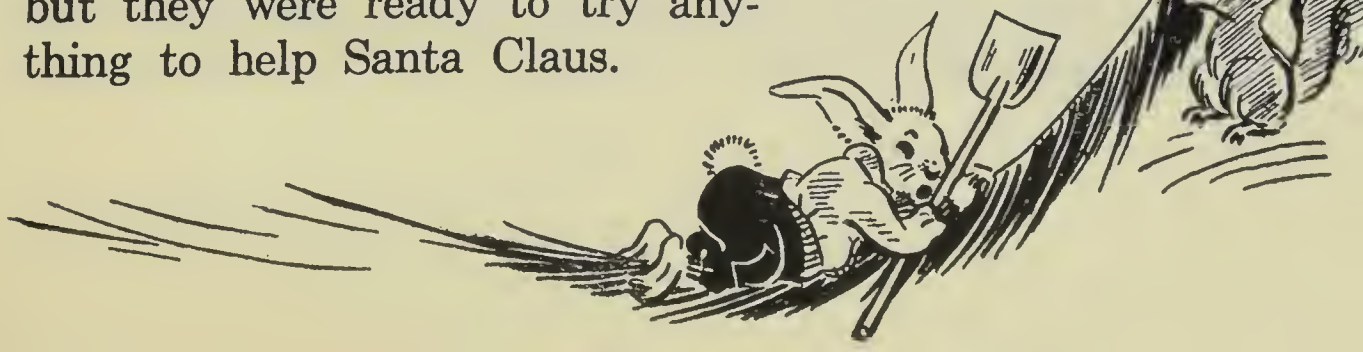
The pine tree did.

"Now you catch it, Squealer, and bring it down to the ground," said Willie.

Squealer did, followed by the chickadee, who was chirping with all his might.

"Now," said Willie, "I'll sit on the branch, and when I say *go*, you let her fly, Squealer. I'll be tossed right up to that cloud, and I'll dig the little reindeer out with my shiny shovel."

The tree, the squirrel, and the chickadee didn't believe that Willie's plan would work, but they were ready to try anything to help Santa Claus.





"One, two, three, go!" shouted

☆ Willie, and Willie, shovel, and all were tossed skyward. Willie landed on a star.

"Oh!" squealed Squealer. "I knew he wouldn't make it. I knew he wouldn't make it. Oh, it's worse than ever now! I wonder what he'll do."

But it didn't take Willie long to decide that. "Look, look!" sang the chickadee. "He's making a bridge of his snow shovel."

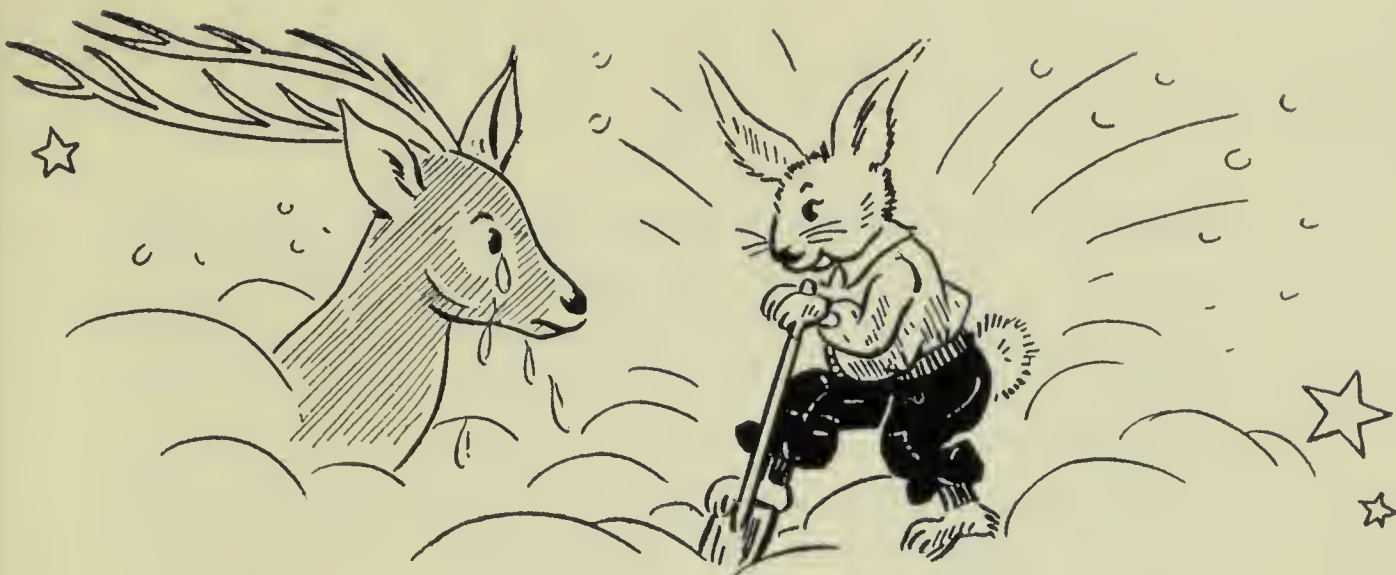
And would you believe it? Willie Whitepaws was doing just that. From star to star he put his shovel. From star to star he crept until he was across the sky and into the west to the little lost reindeer.

"Oh, Willie, Willie!" sobbed Dancer. "Oh, Willie, I'm so glad you've come! I couldn't have . . . I couldn't have lasted much longer."

Knee-deep in the snowy cloud, the little deer, now exhausted from his days of struggle, hung his pretty horned head and cried.

Willie unzipped his zipper, and reaching into the pocket of his little plaid vest, he brought out his Christmas handkerchief. Drying the little deer's eyes with it, he whispered: "Don't cry, Dancer. Everything is going to be all right now. I have my shiny shovel with me."

Then Willie started to shovel. He shovelled harder than he had ever hopped in all his life. How the snow flew! He stopped once to mop his brow, and he stopped once to tie his ears back, for they had fallen and were flapping against his cheeks like wet stockings on a line.



"Boy!" he puffed. "I've never seen so much snow in all my life. All the snow for all the world must be in this cloud."

"I'm sorry to be such a bother, Willie," said Dancer.

"Oh, it's no bother at all," said Willie. "But we were wondering, the tree, the squirrel, the chickadee, and I, how you ever got left up here all alone. It was funny for the others to leave you."

"They couldn't help it," said Dancer. "It happened because Santa Claus was tired . . . so, so tired. It was Christmas Eve, you know."

When Dancer was free, he told Willie that on that night when you hung your stocking and I hung mine, Santa Claus had visited every house in the world, that he'd worked until his old hands trembled and his old body ached, and that when he'd filled the last stocking in a shanty in the south-land, he had been just so weary he couldn't hold up his head, and he had climbed into the sleigh. He hadn't worried, for he knew his reindeer would find their way home. They would head for the north-land along the Milky Way. All had gone well until a falling star had

caught in Dancer's harness. It had cut the straps through. The harness had given way. Dancer had kept up with the others as well as he could. And he had kept their pace, too, until this snow cloud had crossed their path.

"Dasher tried to wake Santa Claus," said the little deer, "and so did Lady Moon, but Santa just slept on. And I . . . oh, I wallowed in the snow . . . and . . . well, I've been here ever since. If you hadn't seen me, Willie, I don't know what I'd have done."

"The pine tree and the chickadee and Squealer Squirrel all helped too, you know," said Willie. "But I guess most of all it was my shiny shovel."

"It's a great shovel, Willie," said Dancer. "Where did you get it?"

"Santa Claus gave it to me," said Willie. "You and Santa Claus brought it to me on Christmas Eve. I made up a song about it."

"Would you like to sing that song to Santa Claus?" said the little deer.

"Oh, would I?" said Willie, his heart pounding happily. "But how could I ever do that?"

"Well," said the little reindeer, "Santa Claus will want to thank you for saving my life, you know. I'm going home now. So hop up on my back, Willie, and we'll away."

"Look, look!" said the tree, the bird, and Squealer Squirrel. "Look! Willie's going to Santa Claus Land. I wonder what he'll see."

But you don't have to wonder, for I'm going to tell you.

Willie saw Santa Claus, and Willie sang his shovel song to him.

"Well done!" said Santa Claus. "Well done, Willie Whitepaws!" And he laughed, and his kindly old eyes shone with a quiet happiness. "My heart was well nigh broken," he went on, "when I found that Dancer was gone. We hunted and hunted. But the sky is so big . . . so, so big," said Santa Claus.

"Yes," said Willie, "for the pine tree didn't see Dancer. Neither did the chickadee, nor Squealer Squirrel. And it just chanced that I saw him. For you know how rabbits are. We just hop and hop and hop, and then we hop some more."

"Well, I'm thankful for the rabbits," said Santa Claus. "The world would be a very sad place without them. And I won't forget what you've done for me either, Willie. I'll remember this next Christmas."

Willie smiled happily as he said good-bye. And do you know how he went home? He slid . . . on the shiny shovel, of course.



*Just Mary says
Good-bye! Happy Playtime!*

